THE COMMUNIST

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The Open Letter and the Struggle Against the N.R.A.

By EARL BROWDER

IT is almost three months since the Party issued the Open Letter to the membership. This letter called for a sharp change in the methods of our work, a drive into the basic industries and into the shops, the rooting of the Party among the decisive strata of the working class by leading and organizing their struggles for their daily economic and political needs. It is time to begin to review what we have accomplished to carry out the Open Letter, to see where the weak points are in the battle line, how we can strengthen our advance.

We need to know exactly where we are. There is no value to us in bubbling enthusiasm which optimistically sees everything through rosy spectacles that magnify our little achievements and hide our shortcomings. This way is beset with great dangers. Nor can we waste our valuable time listening to the croakings of the pessimists, who see crepe hanging on our door, chaos and confusion in our house. These downhearted ones project their own inner condition as that of the movement, and try to make their picture into the reality. Neither of these is the attitude of the Bolshevik, who brings enthusiasm to his work, not by feeding on illusions but, on the contrary, precisely by making the most objective estimate of reality and finding that program of action which will transform the reality into something more satisfactory.

Our Open Letter is a program of action, and our job is to find the best, most effective means to carry it out in life.

Have we moved ahead a few steps? Yes, in some respects. The trade unions in which we play a leading role have led many struggles, and won a high percentage of victories for the workers. As a result, these unions are growing; they have multiplied their membership about three times in the last three months. And some of this advance has been in decisive industries; in steel, where the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union is becoming a mass organization, as a result of winning the first strikes in the industry since 1919-20; in textiles, where the National Textile Workers

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Union is playing an outstanding role in independently organizing and leading the workers, and in establishing a united front from below with the workers in the reformist unions.

These victories are the fruits of three factors: (1) The spontaneous upsurge of the workers' struggles and their radicalization, which we have begun to equip ourselves to organize and direct; through (2) the improvement in the political line and methods of work of the Party, by applying the directives of the Open Letter; and (3) our correct analysis of the N.R.A. and the "New Deal", and the prompt and fearless tactical application of the methods of struggle worked out at the Extraordinary Party Conference.

In all cases where we have a proper understanding of these three factors, there we have made considerable advances. Where we have continued to stagnate, that is where one or all of these factors are not yet understood.

The lack of understanding of these factors is a concrete expression of the right danger in our Party, sometimes expressed as slowness of orientation, sometimes as a reflection of opportunist ideas, of moods of pessimism and capitulation.

SPONTANEOUS UPSURGE AND RADICALIZATION

Already in 1932, at our Fifteenth Plenum, we noted the gradual rise of the strike movement, we spoke sharply against the tendency to ignore or underestimate it, and we predicted the rise of a decisive wave of mass strikes. In January 1933, we declared that this wave had begun, signalized by the Detroit automobile strikes which, for the first time during the crisis, won wage advances in a basic industry. At the Extraordinary Party Conference in July, the wave was well under way. Since then it has been swelling into ever larger volume.

Now the strike movement is epidemic. The old fear of the workers in the factories that open activity would result in immediate victimization has been broken down generally. The workers are in motion *in masses*.

Unfortunately, not everywhere have our comrades understood that these new conditions require that they shall, while not abandoning the old tactics of slow and patient work of building up the factory groups by adding individual workers one by one, supplement this by bold initiative of mass action and organization where the workers in mass are spontaneously beginning to move. Too often our comrades have confined themselves within the limits of very secret, very conspiratorial work of setting up the first contacts and groups, in a situation which is already crying aloud for a bold and decisive call to mass action in the open.

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We still underestimate the spontaneous upsurge of the masses. This is true in every district, some more and some less so. As a result, we drag behind the mass activity, instead of being at the head of it. This in turn holds back the whole mass movement, which, without our conscious revolutionary leadership, remains at a lower level of consciousness. We, on our part, become the victims of spontaneity, instead of the vanguard which brings consciousness and organization to the masses.

These moving masses are becoming radicalized. Their movements are the result of the beginnings of radicalization, and their experiences in action are the cause of further radicalization. Throughout our movement we still hear comrades talking only about the "disillusionment" of the workers. But let us give more attention to their *radicalization*, which proceeds swiftly, and every step of which results in the development of mass struggles, even when it still carries along with it the remnants of the Rooseveltian illusions.

The prevailing underestimation of the radicalization of the workers causes us to make all sorts of opportunist mistakes, unnecessary "concessions" to a non-existing "backwardness" of the masses, a totally unjustified fear to bring forward boldly our program and our Party (and our *Daily Worker*), and even a fear to bring forward the trade unions of the T.U.U.L., before these masses. Today we are losing a thousand times more masses by these fears, hesitation, and lagging behind, than by going too fast, than by scaring away the workers by bringing too soon to them our Party and its program.

Many examples have been pointed out in the *Daily Worker* of these opportunist mistakes. Those cases where Party comrades have deliberately kept the *Daily Worker* away from striking masses, fearing that the "red scare" would disrupt the strike, while the non-Party masses demand the *Daily Worker* and spontaneously act themselves to provide the strikers with it—these cases are a danger signal to the entire Party. The same danger exists in a thousand variations, many of them more subtle, harder to recognize, but equally dangerous.

IS THE OPEN LETTER CORRECT?

The second factor making for weakness and mistakes in our work is lack of understanding of the Open Letter and the political line of the Party. Here we will not take up any more time with those who consider the Open Letter as "just another document", who read it mechanically and then forget it. Those are the "dead

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souls" who no longer have anything to give to the movement. In addition to these, there are some comrades who have honest confusion and doubts about concrete questions of policy. Such confusion and doubts are a weakening factor in our work, and make for passivity, working at cross-purposes, and if not cleared up, to serious political differences with these comrades.

For example, one comrade has sent to *The Communist* a long article entitled, "The Open Letter Is Lacking in Political Clarity". He challenges the Party line on four points: (1) the building of the revolutionary unions; (2) our opposition to a Farmer-Labor Party; (3) our estimate of fascization in the U. S.; and (4) our analysis of the causes of fluctuation of the Party membership. These are indeed fundamental questions. Let us briefly answer his criticisms, because by so doing we at the same time attack doubts and weaknesses in many members of the Party who are not able to express them so readily as was this comrade.

This comrade says that to build the revolutionary unions really means "to run away and leave the masses under the full control of the A. F. of L." In this policy he finds the secret of our sectarianism. He does not openly advocate the abandonment of the revolutionary unions, as Lovestone and Cannon do, but his argument is fully in their direction. He makes one reservation; where "as in the case of the furriers' union", the new union has "actually the mass support", then the revolutionary unions are justified. Finally, he advises that we must re-read Lenin's pamphlet *Should Communists Participate in Reactionary Trade Unions?*

We emphatically agree with the last point. Lenin's pamphlet is one of our most necessary text-books. (By the way, a new edition of it is needed.) And if Comrade Bell had studied it more carefully, he could hardly have come to the conclusion that it is our duty to bring the unorganized masses into the A. F. of L., or that, when in the A. F. of L., we should leave the workers there at all costs, even to surrendering our independent class-struggle policy. The central fallacy of his argument is exposed by his "exception" of the furriers' union from his general rule. Today the revolutionary furriers' union has the overwhelming mass of the workers in its ranks, so he is forced to admit its right to existence; but it was not always so. We worked in the reformist furriers' union and won the masses; then the bureaucrats expelled us, and smashed the union. We started the revolutionary union, small at first, while the bureaucrats tried to re-establish the reformist union and, for a while, forced the masses to register with them with the help of the bosses. During that period, all Comrade Bell's arguments would have forced us, if we accepted them, to surrender to the bureaucrats. But

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we did not take such a simple and "logical" line, the easy way. We both proceeded with building the new union, and also working within the reformist union, until, by a correct united front tactic, we won over the whole mass of the workers into our revolutionary union. Comrade Bell accepts the result, but he denies the correctness of the path which brought these results. Further, his argument would lead him to the position of Muste, who refuses to support the Steel and Metal Workers Union in its splendid struggles and organization campaign, because the A. F. of L. has a corrupt and moribund union in the industry, and is trying to organize "federal" (semi-company) unions—a clearly liquidatory position. Eventually it leads to acceptance of the dictum of William Green (already fully accepted by Lovestone and Cannon) that "there is no room in the U. S. for any labor organization except the A. F. of L."

No, there is no unclarity in the Open Letter on this point. It is clearly against the arguments of Comrade Bell, and all who think along those lines.

On the question of Farmer-Laborism, Comrade Bell argues abstractly for four pages that an F.L.P. should be supported "because it will help to drive a wedge between the bourgeoisie and the working class"; he says he "is open to conviction", but that the Open Letter doesn't convince, "is not clear". But the Open Letter is clear; it points out, concretely, not by abstract logic, that today the reformists and sections of the bourgeoisie, seeing the maturing of revolutionary mass movements, are trying to erect all kinds of barriers to hold such movements away from the path of revolutionary struggle, to prevent them from coming under the leadership of the Communists. It declared that chief among such barriers are the projects for a Farmer-Labor Party. There is nothing unclear about this. One can disagree with it, like Norman Thomas, John Dewey, Lovestone, and Cannon (or has Cannon again changed his mind since Trotsky's latest letter?), but one cannot misunderstand it, or find lack of clarity.

Comrade Bell thinks we are unclear about the development of fascism in America. He cites many things as "proof of the full fascist control of the American government", which he thinks we should recognize. But all he proves is that the capitalist class has full control; elements of fascization are present and growing; but developed, matured fascism is still a stage which has not been reached and which can be avoided by bold mass struggles. Our fight against the N. R. A., for workers' rights and better conditions, is a fight against fascization, but it is not helped by declaring that fascism is already the ruling system. It is Comrade Bell who is

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unclear and confused. Our Extraordinary Conference gave a clear and correct analysis of this question.

Comrade Bell complains that the Open Letter is "criticism to the point of besmirching the Party members"; but then himself proceeds to find the explanation of the fluctuation of membership by the stupidity and "parrot-like" activities of the Party units. Both points are entirely wrong. The Open Letter is an instrument of self-criticism of the entire Party, to overcome its weaknesses, sharpest toward the leadership but "besmirching" no one, leaders or rank and file. And the greatest weakness of our units is the remaining influence of such muddled thinking as that of Comrade Bell, which drives away new members by creating the impression of confusion in the Party instead of a living political unity expressed in enthusiastic common work.

The Open Letter is clear—and correct. Discussion must proceed in every unit committee and fraction, until all doubts are dissolved in a full understanding of this historic document. This is necessary to our taking full advantage of the favorable situation for Party growth. The right danger, expressed in the immature theorizing of Comrade Bell, exists in even more dangerous form in the practice of many comrades. It must be liquidated in the fires of criticism.

DEVIATIONS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE N.R.A.

The strongest feature of our Party life in this period has been its unhesitating and correct analysis of and battle against the N.R.A. and the "New Deal". Upon the basis of a clear exposure of its nature as a general attack against the toiling masses and impoverished middle classes, as a program of hunger and war, we worked out realistic tactics to use every possible opportunity of developing the defensive struggles of the workers into a counter-offensive.

Where our work has been weak, where we have suffered setbacks, this can usually be explained wholly or partly by hesitation to accept this line, by our failure to carry it through whole-heartedly, by our surrender to some of the illusions deliberately created by the bourgeoisie among the workers.

Comrade Bell's article reflects these illusions and weaknesses. He thinks we should recognize some progressive features of the N.R.A.; he thinks "it provides the workers with the right to organize themselves", and that we should base our appeal to the masses upon this. Where this theory leads in practice has been shown by some of our trade union work.

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In a certain city some of our very good and hard-working comrades, acting upon the theory of Comrade Bell, approached the workers in a metal factory to organize them. Our comrades said: "Organize under the N.R.A., and support our President in his holy war against the depression". When a company stool-pigeon demanded to know if any Communists were mixed up in this move, our comrades hastened to assure the workers that all Communists were a thousand miles away. They thought they were very cleverly outwitting the reformist leaders and Roosevelt and the N.R.A. The inevitable happened within three weeks, when the first A. F. of L. bureaucrat came along and had us thrown out on our ears; the workers are not afraid of Communists, but they have no confidence in anyone who thinks it necessary to deny his true character. Our comrades had made themselves politically indistinguishable from the reformists, but the reformists had the advantage of being "honest" in their support of Roosevelt.

Many times we have found extreme fears among our leading groups, about the "backwardness" and "illusions regarding N.R.A." among the workers they are leading; but when we have convinced our leaders to actually go among these masses with a bold presentation of our position, then we find that the backwardness and illusions were to a great extent creations of the imagination. They didn't exist except as ghosts. A little light, and they disappeared. For example, a revolutionary union with beginnings of mass membership faced a drive of the employers to bring workers and bosses together in an N.R.A. parade, as a means of putting across the "truce" to prevent wage increases. Our leading comrades hesitated; they knew what should be done, but they were afraid of the "backwardness and illusions" of the workers. After a discussion they were convinced they must boldly fight the N.R.A. parade. The results are shown in the following report from the field:

> "A few days following the discussion we had with you comrades here, regarding our policy on N.R.A. parades, a businessmen's committee came to our union headquarters and in front of about 40 members requested our union to join the N.R.A. parade. They were told that the matter had to be taken up officially with the membership before an answer could be given. The parade was held with no members of our union and very few workers in it, as the various locals voted almost unanimously against participation.
>
> "Also, in the ——— strike, there arose a situation where it was necessary that a sharp and open attack be made against the N.R.A. and Roosevelt, if we were to prevent our ranks from being broken by N.R.A. representatives, who were maneuvering to get into the situation. At a full membership meeting (the big majority of strikers are "Roosevelt Democrats"), we spoke in the sharpest manner. The response was splendid on the part of the strikers.

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> "These events are a valuable indication as to what can actually be done in exposing the N.R.A. if carried through in the proper manner. I am quite sure that there is a pronounced tendency of hesitation in many sections of our Party when it comes to open struggle against Roosevelt and the N.R.A. These workers were no different from those in any other industry or other part of the country."

If it is necessary to face boldly these issues, and to place our position squarely before the workers (and this has been proved), it is, however, equally necessary to insist upon a *convincing* presentation of our position. Too many times our comrades resort to mere shouting, and unclear slogans, to express their opposition to the N.R.A. For example, in one industry the union got out a leaflet for mass distribution, consisting of a few slogans, among which the chief one was: "Down with the National Racketeering Act". Of course, this kind of thing convinces not a single worker, but, on the contrary, may drive away some hesitating elements. We must start from the issues in the life of the workers concerned, which objectively place their immediate interests in opposition to the aims of the N.R.A.; we must patiently and in detail explain these issues; we must show the workers how, by fighting, they can win their demands, but only in struggle against the N.R.A.; and then give proposals for the organization of the fight. With this proper approach we can win large masses of even the most "backward" workers.

On these issues it is clear that the main weakness, the main danger, is that of surrendering to the illusions, of hesitating and capitulating before difficulties, instead of facing them and overcoming them. The same result comes from "leftist" blustering, sterile slogan-shouting of a smart-aleck nature, which is only another way of running away from the real task of *convincing* the workers of the need and possibility of successful struggle.

UNITED FRONT AGAINST THE N.R.A.

In the struggle against N.R.A. are the widest opportunities for applying the tactic of the united front. This was proved in the Cleveland gathering of the Trade Union Conference for United Action. There we united A. F. of L. left-wing unions and minorities, with the Muste tendency, and the revolutionary unions and some independent unions, on a clear platform of struggle against N.R.A. on the basis of the united front.

How this develops in mass action is being shown in the great silk strike. There we have gained a decisive position in the leadership of the masses, chiefly through the correctness of our political attitude to the N.R.A. and the sell-outs conducted under the Blue Eagle

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by the A. F. of L. and Socialist leadership. By means of this correct political position we are gradually building up our strength organizationally.

Our advances in the silk industry were achieved only by overcoming all sorts of opportunist tendencies in our own ranks. There also we had to convince our Party comrades that the masses were not so "backward" as they thought, that the masses were ready to fight, and that when they fight, then their illusions can be quickly shattered by a clear, convincing and simple presentation of the class issues involved.

We have really built a united front from below in the silk strike. The main mass of workers follows our slogans; they have united picket lines; they have built a central strike committee of elected delegates from almost half of the strikes over a big territory, involving independent unions, the N.T.W.U., and several A. F. of L. locals. They have defeated the sell-out of the MacMahon A. F. of L. "five-week truce", and are marching toward a national strike of the entire industry, against the N.R.A., the employers, the Labor Board, the A. F. of L., and the Socialist Party. They have good prospects of winning substantial improvements in wages and conditions.

BUILDING THE PARTY AND DECREASING FLUCTUATION

The greatest danger signal to the Party today is the slowness of recruiting new members, and the high degree of fluctuation of membership whereby we lose about the same number we gain, with the total membership remaining at about 20,000 for many months.

This is the result, primarily, of insufficient clarity on the Party line in the every-day work, of insufficient understanding of the Open Letter, and its still weak application in life. One sign of the confusion that hinders the building of the Party is the existence of such ideas as those expressed by Comrade Bell's article mentioned before. This Hamlet-like balancing between the Party line and the position of the renegades, social-fascists, and reformists, is a poisonous influence inside our Party, and can do more than anything else (even when expressed by only a few comrades) to drive away workers from our Party.

To build the Party and the revolutionary trade union movement, it is necessary to take up a sharply intolerant attitude towards such vacillations and waverings on the Party line. Only a strong, bold application of the Party line can win and hold workers in the Party and unions.

That means that the Party line must not only be talked about, but that it must be applied in the life of each Party unit, committee, and fraction. It must be applied collectively, according to a plan,

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which is the only way to get the Party, as an organized body, into action as a mass leader and organizer. It must be applied on the basis of the tasks of each particular unit, committee, or fraction. When this is done, then the Party life will become rich and interesting. Where it is done, the Party begins to grow in numbers, to hold its membership, to become a mass influence.

A tremendous opportunity is before our movement now, to become a broad mass movement rooted among the American workers. A great opportunity lies before our Party to become a mass Party.

We have begun to move, in some industries and localities, and in some phases of our work, along the lines of the Open Letter. But the progress is spotty, and not yet consolidated. A serious study of our weaknesses, a determined and sustained effort to overcome them, an intolerant struggle on two fronts—against the chief danger, the right danger, and against "leftist" phrase-mongering—this is the order of the day, that we may move forward more determinedly toward the leadership of the great class struggles maturing in the U. S. A.

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The Struggle Against the "New Deal" in the Coal Fields

By B. FRANK

THE correctness, the enormous value, and the full significance of the Open Letter can be seen with particular clearness in the mining industry. The examination of our work in this basic industry, in the light of the Open Letter, will not only help to establish a solid foundation for the Party and the National Miners Union among the miners, but will greatly benefit the entire revolutionary movement, particularly in the building of the revolutionary trade unions and the oppositions inside the reformist unions.

In every one of the past twelve years the miners were engaged in some major strike struggle in various key coal fields, resisting the brutal attacks of the coal operators on their standard of living and fighting for better working and living conditions. But despite these heroic struggles, through which the miners have won many victories, they saw, thanks to the treacherous leadership of John L. Lewis and his appointed henchmen, the destruction of their one-time powerful and militant organization; they saw their standard of living slashed below starvation level, and their working and living conditions brought to the level of a real modern slavery; they also saw the remnants of the United Mine Workers of America, for which they had fought over 40 years, being used by Lewis as a wage-cutting and strike-breaking instrument.

But they continue to fight with ever greater vigor and determination. The struggles of the miners against the coal operators and the Lewis machine took very sharp forms since the beginning of the world crisis of capitalism, and particularly since the "New Deal" of President Roosevelt. For the past six months, since the "New Deal" went into effect, and especially since the birth of the N.I.R.A., the miners have been on the war-path, fighting against the spectre of growing hunger. No major coal field has been spared from the wave of militant strikes and the struggles of the unemployed, and the result has been a growing unity of the employed and unem-

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ployed. In Pennsylvania and Ohio more than 50 mines, employing 20,000 miners, struck for local demands on and after April 1, winning many important victories. These local strikes were accompanied with tremendously growing radicalization, with the consciousness that the "New Deal" and the N.I.R.A. had failed to bring about the promised improvement in the working and living conditions. The feelings of the miners that they have the right to organize and "bargain collectively", developed into a great strike of 70,000 in July. It took the entire Lewis machine, scores of government mediators, a flock of politicians of all shades, and a promise by President Roosevelt of a prompt and favorable settlement of all the grievances, to send the miners back to work temporarily and to prevent the spreading of the strike which threatened practically every coal field in the country.

But the grievances were not settled. On the contrary, they have multiplied. The existing miserable standard of living was reduced to a new low level through rapidly increasing prices. The terror of the employers took an exceptionally sharp form, resulting in a mass blacklisting of the most militant miners. The very next day after the miners were driven into the pits a whole series of repeated local strikes took place. The mediators, the politicians and the U.M.W.A. leaders continued to plead with the miners and to threaten them not to strike. But at the beginning of September these local strikes against the accumulated grievances again developed into a mass strike of about the same proportions, with greater fighting determination, deeper hatred for the Lewis leadership, and a considerable mistrust in the Roosevelt government. *The chief demand in the strike is the recognition of an organization.*

Meanwhile, 8,000 are striking in Utah and New Mexico. In Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, West Virginia and other coal fields the miners are engaged in a whole series of local and regional strikes, with the strike sentiment spreading throughout the coal industry. The strikes are accompanied with fierce struggles of the unemployed against complete and partial cuts in relief, for more relief, for clothing, against evictions, for social insurance, etc. *These strikes and the struggles of the unemployed are taking place in defiance of the Lewis machine; the terror of the employers, the local, state, and federal governments; in defiance of the "New Deal", the N.I.R.A., and President Roosevelt himself. Although not fully conscious of it, the miners are a challenge to the N.I.R.A.*

The great militancy of the miners, the conduct of the strike by the rank and file themselves, the mass picketing and mass marches

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in spreading the strike, the formulation of the demands, the refusal to obey the orders of the Lewis machine, the complete unity of the Negro and white miners, the outstanding activity and leadership of the youth, the considerable participation of women in the struggle—these are the characteristics of the present strike struggles. In theory the miners accept the U.M.W.A. but in practice they carry out the revolutionary strike strategy propagated by the Party and the N.M.U. and which was especially brought home by the experiences of the 1931 strike. Despite the great hatred for Lewis and his appointees with their whole wage-cutting, strike-breaking, arbitration and sell-out policy, the miners are striking for the recognition of the U.M.W.A. as the main issue, of course, with the understanding that Lewis and his entire clique will be kicked out as soon as the U.M.W.A. is recognized. Although exercising great ideological influence, our Party and the N.M.U., outside of Utah and New Mexico where the miners are striking for the recognition of the N.M.U., play an insignificant role in these mass strikes; we are almost completely isolated from the masses of miners and can not even speak at their meetings, picket lines, and other gatherings.

How can it be explained that the miners, who are against the Lewis machine to the extent of refusing to obey any decision, of refusing to pay initiation fees and dues, of refusing to permit the U.M.W.A. organizers to speak at meetings, of refusing to accept mediators any longer, refuse at the same time to accept the leadership of the N.M.U., while accepting and carrying out its policy?

How is it possible that our Party, which is known to tens of thousands of miners, not only through agitation and propaganda, but through actual participation in every major struggle of the miners in the last twelve years, has become so "suddenly" isolated from the masses of the fighting miners?

How is it possible that the National Miners Union, which was born in the longest and most bitterly fought strike in the history of the miners and in the greatest struggle against the Lewis machine; which organized and led such great strikes as Pennsylvania-Ohio in 1931, Kentucky in 1932; which took away the leadership from Lewis in the Ohio strike last year; which took part in the most important strikes of the miners in practically every field; which is leading daily struggles of the unemployed; and which, as late as last April, led a series of local strikes involving some 20,000 miners —how is it possible that the N.M.U., with a record like this, finds itself, as an organization, completely outside of the mass strikes of the miners, the same miners whom it just recently led in struggle?

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This is the question which must be analyzed and explained, and from which proper conclusions and lessons must be drawn, if we are to overcome the present situation; if we are to give the miners the so-much-needed leadership and guidance and establish a solid foundation for the Party and the N.M.U. This analysis must be distinctly self-critical. The Open Letter gives us the key, not only for the analysis of these questions, but for drawing the proper conclusions for our immediate work.

Some of the comrades would want us to believe that the "New Deal" and the N.I.R.A. are responsible for the fact that the miners have joined and are striking for the recognition of the U.M.W.A. They argue somewhat as follows: "The N.I.R.A. has set the miners in motion. Because of the labor section of the N.I.R.A. the miners believe that the Roosevelt government will force the U.M.W.A. upon the coal operators. On the other hand, the U.M.W.A. officials told the miners that if they don't join now, they will have to pay $50 later as initiation fee. They see no possibility of the recognition of the N.M.U. and therefore have joined the U.M.W.A."

This is a false and extremely dangerous theory. It is dangerous especially because it has permeated quite a few leading comrades in the Party and the N.M.U., although they do not advocate this theory openly. This theory sees the strength, the tremendous possibility, and the activity of the enemy, but it does not see the revolutionary role and capacity of the miners, the role of the Party and the N.M.U. It sees the possibility of the capitalist and not the possibility of the revolutionary way out of the crisis. It sees only tremendous illusions but not the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, although these masses are engaged in mass strike struggles. It does not examine our shortcomings, our weaknesses and mistakes, our methods of work, our approach to the daily problems of the miners, and therefore makes no attempt to solve these burning problems in order to improve our work and lay the basis for the building of the Party and the N.M.U. as the leaders of the miners. Some of the proponents of this theory are already advocating the liquidation of the N.M.U. and its substitution by the opposition movements; others are advocating the formation of an independent union; while those who agree with this theory but do not express it openly, are liquidating the N.M.U. in practice and are also failing to build any semblance of opposition movement. This theory must be fought, defeated, and completely exterminated as a theory inimical to the revolutionary movement.

While we must recognize the tremendous illusions created among the miners by the "New Deal" and the N.I.R.A. and de-

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velop concrete methods to combat and destroy them, we must not over-estimate these illusions and particularly their duration. Nor must we attempt to explain our failures in the recent period by the present illusions of the miners. The Utah-New Mexico strike shows that the illusions of the miners are not responsible for the temporary situation in which our Party and the N.M.U. find themselves. The explanation of the causes for our failure to play a decisive and leading role in the present struggles must be sought first of all in our methods of work, in our approach to the daily needs of the miners, in the composition of the Party and the N.M.U., and in the amount of work we have done, especially among the employed miners. In other words, we must examine seriously our political and organizational activity.

An extensive analysis would require going back into the conduct and the ending of the Pennsylvania-Ohio and Kentucky strikes, the participation in the rank and file movements in the anthracite and Illinois, in the development of the unemployed movement, etc. But the lack of space does not permit such an analysis. The mining comrades especially are referred to the R.I.L.U. resolution, particularly to the resolution of the E.C.C.I., *Lessons of the Strike Struggles in the U. S. A.*, printed in the May, 1932, *Communist*. It suffices to say that due to our failure to build a solid organization both of the Party and the N.M.U., in the course of the strikes, and due to our failure to end the strikes in an organized manner, we separated ourselves from the overwhelming majority of the miners who went back to work, and have remained the Party and the Union of a small minority of the evicted, black-listed, primarily foreign-born miners, living mostly in tents and barracks, looking upon the employed as "strike-breakers", and actually approaching them as such. As a result a stone wall has been built between the employed and the black-listed miners, and the N.M.U. has appeared in the eyes of the masses of the employed as an organization looking upon them as "strike-breakers".

Since then both the Party and the N.M.U. have remained the organizations of the evicted, black-listed, foreign-born miners, not having contacts even with the masses of the unemployed. Our main activity has been centered among this section of the miners. Demonstrations, mass meetings, affairs and everything else were either in the barracks or the tents. With the exception of an occasional campaign in the Terminal Mines and a small campaign around the March 19 Conference, no work worth while mentioning was done among the employed. The Party up to date has not one single

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well-functioning mine unit. Neither does the N.M.U. have one single well-functioning mass local of the employed. Since the 1931 strike the Party never appeared before the miners as a political organization, either through the mine bulletins, leaflets, meetings, or otherwise, with the exception of special occasions such as May Day. The *Daily Worker* and current literature were not known even to the Party membership. Practically the same applies to the N.M.U., which did not have and still does not have its official organ. As a result of all this we have had no contacts with the employed, no concrete program of struggle for the employed, no development of new cadres, but have had a continuous financial crisis, with the leading forces running in a vicious circle, working day and night but producing no results. It is true many good resolutions could be found in the files of the Party and the N.M.U., where they were put after adoption and then forgotten.

Only in preparation for the March 19 Conference did we develop some activity among the employed and establish some contacts, all of which was intensified later in the development of the local strikes. Even in the preparations for April 1 there were all sorts of hesitancy, reliance on spontaneity, etc. In Republic the comrades went and told the miners not to strike, although they were ready to strike and did strike a few days later, but not under our leadership. In the course of these strikes there was continuous and systematic resistance to the building of the Party and the N.M.U. and to the development of the united front. Out of 20,000 miners on strike during the period of two months, less than a thousand were recruited into the N.M.U. and less than a dozen into the Party.

At the time of these local strikes the N.I.R.A. was in process of preparation. At the same time the U.M.W.A. officials started their organizational drive. It began in Avella where the U.M.W.A. officials, jointly with the American Legion and the county officials, developed a reign of terror, broke the strike and drove the Party and the N.M.U. completely out of existence, due to our failure to build the Party and the N.M.U. at the beginning of the strike. They also took over the leadership of several important local strikes organized by us. With the adoption of N.I.R.A., the U.M.W.A. officials began to intensify their organizational drive, utilizing and still further cultivating and spreading the illusions and confusion among the miners. The Party and the Union up to this time never took up seriously the effects of the N.I.R.A. and the intensification

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of the U.M.W.A. drive. So the U.M.W.A. campaign was developed into the greatest movement in the history of the U.M.W.A., with the best reformist forces and unlimited money, without the challenge on our part. This, in spite of the fact that we had thousands of contacts established in the course of the local strikes, and in spite of the fact that many miners wrote letters to the N.M.U. and even sent committees asking for advice, organizers, literature, etc. During the whole period of the U.M.W.A. drive the Party and the N.M.U. did not organize one single mass meeting. All of this can be explained only by the fact that we gravely underestimated the role of the U.M.W.A. and that we were not able to understand to what extent the government and the employers would use the reformist leaders, especially in the mining industry, in putting the N.I.R.A. into effect.

The first reaction of the N.M.U. came when the U.M.W.A. campaign was at its peak, when it held the last huge meeting of about 15,000 in Fayette County. This reaction came in the form of a leaflet explaining the meaning of the N.I.R.A.; but it came when the U.M.W.A. had an overwhelming majority of the miners sign the pledge card. But even at this stage we were not able to understand the real danger of the U.M.W.A. officialdom. Instead of taking the U.M.W.A. as an established fact and adopting a policy to penetrate the U.M.W.A. ranks and carry on a struggle against the leaders and for a militant policy of the miners, we were speculating about whether the U.M.W.A. leaders would organize a strike and we came to the conclusion that they would not and that therefore the campaign would collapse. We even criticized those rank-and-file comrades who joined the U.M.W.A. and demanded their withdrawal from the U.M.W.A. We could not even imagine that the miners would strike over the heads of Lewis and his henchmen.

The many promises of the N.I.R.A. and the U.M.W.A. leaders did not materialize. The conditions of the miners became worse and the desire for strike developed. Discharges and evictions for the activity in the U.M.W.A. were the immediate causes for the strike of 70,000 miners, fighting for the recognition of the U.M.W.A. and threatening to spread into other fields. The N.M.U. found itself in a position where it could speak to the miners only as an outsider. We were not able to find one mine in the entire strike area to initiate a struggle for the rank-and-file control of the strike and to prepare against the betrayal which we knew was coming. The fact that it took the government, the

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U.M.W.A. leaders, the politicians and mediators fully ten days before they could send the miners back to work without the miners having any leadership; the fact that local strikes followed immediately and again developed into a mass strike, prove that the betrayal could have been defeated had we been able to give the miners leadership.

However, the betrayal of the strike, the worsening of the conditions, the reductions in the wage scale offered by the employers themselves, the campaign, though small, of the N.M.U. against the betrayal and against the operators' code, have changed the situation considerably. Whole sections of the miners have developed a friendly attitude towards the N.M.U. The miners are openly discussing the correctness of the N.M.U. policy and its brave leadership of the Utah-New Mexico strike. The members and the followers of the N.M.U. are being elected on the leading committees of the U.M.W.A. locals. The whole atmosphere is rapidly changing and the N.M.U. is faced with tremendous possibilities of taking over the leadership of large sections of the miners inside the U.M.W.A. through the rank-and-file movement.

To take full advantage of the favorably developing situation, to create a still more favorable situation and really entrench ourselves among the miners and lead them in daily struggles, all of the above-mentioned shortcomings, weaknesses, and vacillations must be eliminated and the Party and the N.M.U. must come forward in a most determined manner. To accomplish this it is necessary, first of all, to have a clear policy and to develop proper tactics corresponding to the present situation. What must be our policy?

The chief immediate task is to put the Party and the N.M.U. organizations on a well-functioning basis, particularly among the employed and striking miners, and to recruit the best elements into the Party and wherever possible into the N.M.U. although we cannot expect to have immediately a mass recruiting drive for the N.M.U. This must be done with the immediate orientation towards the building of a mass Left Wing movement inside the U.M.W.A. The building of this movement must be based on the struggle against the Lewis leadership, against check-off, for the rank-and-file control of the union, and for the immediate needs of the miners. Special demands for the young miners who will receive $1.00 a day less than the adult, special demands for Negroes, concrete and systematic approach to the American miners, mobilization of women, etc., are the essential elements in the struggle against the Lewis machine. The struggle against relief cuts and for social insurance

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must be fitted into the general stream of struggle, not only of the unemployed, but of the strikers and the employed as outstanding issues and demands of the miners. It is also necessary to carry out the decisions of the Cleveland Conference, to establish proper relations with the movements in other fields, etc.

These immediate tasks require a most carefully worked out program of concentration in the strategic points in order to establish a solid base for the Party, the N.M.U. and the revolutionary opposition and to make it possible in this way to initiate all the necessary actions of the miners. The Party must come forward as an independent organization in all of these struggles and particularly in the election campaign, which must be made a campaign against the starvation code, for the right to strike, against arbitration, etc.

The coal code will not and can not meet the needs of the miners. It has already reduced their standard of living through increased prices which will continue to increase. The miners will not and can not accept a lower standard of living. It is our task to help them see the real meaning of the code; and they will fight despite the anti-strike laws, despite the Lewis machine.

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Swinging to the Offensive Against the N.R.A. in the Steel Mills

By JOHN MELDON

National Secretary, S.M.W.I.U.

"When the code was signed, Washington hastily gathered that Gen. Johnson had clinched another victory, but as the code is studied it appears that the industry got what it proposed and that N.R.A. accepted the industry's suggestions in regard to hours, wages and working conditions, except the deleted open-shop clause, in preference to alternatives proposed by both organized and radical labor organizations."

THE above-quoted short paragraph from the trade journal *Steel* portrays in a few words the present situation in the steel industry. It is a cynical admission that the Steel Trust and allied independents got what they wanted, that is, a continuation of the identical conditions of wages, hours and employment as had existed before N.R.A. It is also an admission of the growing influence and extent of organization of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union, referred to as the "radical labor organization". When such an arrogant journal as *Steel* pauses in its comments to mention "radical labor organizations", it is a reluctant admission on the part of the steel employers of the effect of the "Steel Workers' Code" put forth by the S.M.W.I.U., and the growing support of tens of thousands of steel workers to the program of our union.

In a little over two months, since the Extraordinary Party Conference in July, the S.M.W.I.U. has grown from a small sectarian organization of 1,200 members to over 15,000 members throughout the country. Within this period, it has organized and led many strikes, achieving either complete victories or substantial partial gains in every single instance.

Emerging from a virtual state of stagnation, the S.M.W.I.U. has become a factor that has aroused the attention of the entire steel industry, both of the bosses and the workers. The present membership of the S.M.W.I.U. signalizes only the beginning of

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the growth and the extending influence of our union. Mass organization and mass struggles are on the order of the day for our union, and the attention of the whole Party must be focused on the steel industry, for on the outcome of these struggles depends to a large extent the immediate future of our Party, if we are to carry out seriously the line of the Open Letter and root our Party in the basic sections of the American working class.

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Can the "sudden" growth of the S.M.W.I.U. in steel be attributed to the "illusions" of the steel workers that they have the N.R.A.-given right to organize, as some of our comrades believe? Or—as other comrades believe—is our rapid growth due entirely to a sudden brilliant spurt of activity and leadership on the part of the S. M. W. I. U.? To believe either of these theories would lead one right back to our former state of sectarian isolation, for such theories reflect the worst sort of narrow approach and lack of *faith in the masses*. The steel workers are *not* joining our union by the thousands because of any illusions on their part regarding the "right to organize" or because of any miraculous performance of Leninist leadership on the part of the leading comrades in the S.M.W.I.U.; the steel workers are building the S.M.W.I.U. because they want to struggle and they see in its program the necessary instrument through which they can successfully carry out these struggles.

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The lever by means of which our union was forcibly removed from its rut of isolation was the steps taken several months ago to expose the N.R.A. through the development of a campaign around the "Steel Workers' Code". This code, worked out collectively with the steel workers, particularly in the Pittsburgh steel centers, was printed and distributed on a mass scale. Although we formulated the code as a means of *agitation*, the workers saw in it *a program of struggle* and a platform around which to organize and fight for higher wages, shorter hours, etc. The campaign conducted for the code reached thousands of steel workers, and for the first time brought the program of our union before the masses in the industry.

Our comrades in the S.M.W.I.U. immediately saw that a continuation of our former policy of "underground" approach to the steel workers would not fit the needs of the day. Open aggressive mass activity was required if the S.M.W.I.U. was to become the

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leader and organizer of the steel workers. The workers are looking for militant organization and fearless leadership. Unless these requirements are met, the workers will look elsewhere for leadership other than that of our union; and in many centers of the industry the steel workers are doing precisely this, because of the failure of our comrades to understand the situation and to come forward boldly to meet it. In those centers of the industry where our Party and the S.M.W.I.U. have not yet completely shed their fog-like cloak of sectarianism which hides them from the workers, the steel and metal workers are falling prey to the demagogy and treachery of the reformists of all kinds. This is especially true in some sections of the Chicago, Cleveland, and Philadelphia districts.

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What do we mean by "adopting an aggressive and fearless policy"? We mean in brief, the following: The program of the S.M.W.I.U. must be brought *openly* and energetically before the steel workers in all districts, in every mill, neighborhood and steel town where it is humanly possible to do so. In doing this, the class-struggle principle of our program must be stressed and *not hidden*. We are *not* to tell the workers that "Section 7 of the N.R.A. gives all workers the right to join any union of their own choosing", which some of our comrades justify in their minds as the correct way to "fool" the workers into joining our union. We must expose Section 7 for what it is—an attempt on the part of the government and the employers to stampede the workers into Mr. Green's A. F. of L. with its "No Strike" policy, or into the company unions (and into the Muste "maybe we strike" unions). And having carried out this preliminary activity, if we expect to organize the workers, lead the struggles of the steel workers and keep them under the banners of a class-struggle union, we must meet the A. F. of L. head-on. Above all, we must fight the "red scare" in the most effective manner possible, *i.e., by building the Party while building the S.M.W.I.U.* Unless we build the Party simultaneously with the building of the union, we are building on sand.

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Even in those districts where the union is growing the fastest and where strikes are being led and won, (Pittsburgh and Buffalo) all of the usual weaknesses which manifest themselves when we engage in mass work are pronounced. In the Pittsburgh district, there existed until recently the old tendency to separate "trade

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union work" from "Party work". Consequently, as the foregoing phrase implies, the Party was being rapidly separated *from the masses of steel workers*. All of us involved in the building of the union became "too busy to build the Party" and adopted the attitude that the task of building the Party was the task solely of the full-time Party functionaries and membership in the district. As a result of this tendency, even the collective work and guidance from the District Buro of the Party became seriously hampered. It was only through the most severe application of pressure on the part of the District Buro that the beginnings of a change took place. Today our comrades are beginning to realize that the union leaders are leading Communists, and as such have as one of their most basic tasks the personal responsibility for the building of the Party as they build the union.

Although it seems to be a contradiction, those comrades who hesitated to build the Party were the very ones who were carrying on an effective and bold campaign against the "red scare" in every instance that it was raised in the ranks of the workers by the bosses and their agents. But at this point our comrades stopped; the actual building of the Party as the best method of fighting the "red scare" was lost sight of.

Very much to the amazement of some of our comrades in leading S.M.W.I.U. activity, they found out that when they took personal responsibility for building the Party, the workers listened to them eagerly and joined the Party because they looked on these comrades as leaders and splendid examples of Communist Party members. The workers regard our S.M.W.I.U. leaders as organizers, advisors, and fighters; the steel workers see our organizers fighting the reformists and exposing them; the workers see our organizers on the picket lines, in some instances for two days and nights without relief: who then is better qualified to bring the Party to the steel workers and bring these workers into the Party than these very same comrades "who are too busy to build the Party"?

Recently in the Pittsburgh district, a beginning was made in this work when some of our leading S.M.W.I.U. functionaries brought four members of the W—— strike committee into the Party, and six local steel workers in A——, who all hold leading positions in various locals of our union. Most of these new members are native workers, with tremendous prestige among their fellow-workers. This is just a beginning, as the Pittsburgh district has approximately 5,000 members in the S.M.W.I.U., and the Party must draw in at least a new recruitment of 150 steel workers, as

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called for in the District Resolution. These new Party members must be composed in the main of the local leaders of the union in the various towns of the Pittsburgh district.

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In the steel town of Ambridge, Pa., the American Federation of Labor has so far not been able to get a foothold among the steel workers. On the other hand, in McKeesport the A. F. of L. is fast achieving a strangle-hold over the masses of steel workers. Why is this so? Because in Ambridge we built up a membership of five locals and over two thousand members by conducting from the very beginning a consistent campaign against the red scare and an uncompromising fight and exposure of the A. F. of L. Consequently, when the A. F. of L. attempted to hold a mass meeting in Ambridge recently, it was only through the intervention of our organizers that the A. F. of L. speaker escaped a beating at the hands of the infuriated workers. On the other hand, no campaign was carried on in McKeesport; the red scare was allowed to go unanswered by our union, and, as a result, the A. F. of L. has the beginnings of a mass base in one of the mills on which we have "concentrated" for the past several years.

The A. F. of L., with full and open support of the Steel Trust, is carrying on unprecedented activity in the steel and heavy metal industry. In spite of its history of treachery, its slimy class-collaborationist policy and its obsolete craft union structure, thousands of steel and metal workers are joining the various affiliated unions of the A. F. of L. in many steel and metal centers. In the beginning of the A. F. of L. campaign there was considerable scepticism in our ranks as to its recuperative powers, and there was a widespread belief that it was so thoroughly discredited that such affiliated unions as the Amalgamated Association of Iron, as the Steel and Tin Workers, the International Association of Machinists, would never be able to bring the workers within their ranks again. But our comrades forgot one important factor in the situation: *there is a new generation of workers in the steel industry!* In brief, the older steel and metal workers who suffered from the treachery of the A. F. of L. in past years are rapidly being replaced by younger workers who have never had contact or experience with the A. F. of L., and therefore are susceptible to the demagogy of the misleaders. It is precisely this younger generation, which has come into the industry since 1919, that is falling prey to the Blue-Eagle American Federation of Labor. With the aid of the government, the Steel Trust and the reactionary press, the A. F. of L. is making frantic

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efforts to establish a potential fascist base in the industry by organizing thousands of these younger workers as an instrument against the coming struggles of the steel workers and especially against the growing influence of the S.M.W.I.U. It was the young and inexperienced miners whom the U.M.W.A. utilized in the recent mine-field campaign as "night-riders" to terrorize the older miners and to break up any trend to militant organization. So will it be in the steel industry, unless our union and Party take energetic steps to win over the youth. Our best guarantee of winning and holding the young steel workers will be in the building of the Young Communist League. At least 2,000 of the S.M.W.I.U. members in the Pittsburgh district alone are young workers; but to date the building of the Y.C.L. has been too slow. If we are to defeat the A. F. of L. in its drive for the youth, we must first of all build the Y.C.L. as a strong bulwark between the young workers and the misleaders.

* * * * *

In every single strike conducted and won by our union in recent months, the Unemployed Councils played a prominent and often a decisive part. Classic examples of solidarity between the employed and unemployed were displayed in all instances. Especially in the industrial towns (McKees Rocks, Buffalo, Greensburg, etc.) were the strikes won due to the mass activity of the Unemployed Councils in conjunction with the activities of our union. Our Party and unions must take note of the following fact, proved in struggle: In those industrial centers where the Unemployed Councils have been built and activized in the everyday struggles for relief, these Councils can be immediately transformed into a double-edged sword against the bourgeoisie, especially when the open struggles of the employed begin to develop. A strong unemployed movement is an almost certain guarantee that the struggles of the employed will be won.

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Our union and Party face gigantic tasks in this immediate period of rapidly changing relations of forces in the class struggle. The steel workers, along with the workers in all other basic industries, are preparing to swing over from the defensive to the offensive against the N.R.A. starvation government. At the moment, widespread confusion exists in the ranks of the workers, especially in regard to the Roosevelt government. Many workers *believe* in Roosevelt and his N.R.A. Workers by the thousands are fighting

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N.R.A. and Roosevelt by entering into mass strikes, while at the same time they shout their allegiance to Roosevelt's N.R.A. and demand the Blue Eagle on the picket-lines. This phenomenon, paradoxical on the surface, indicates the fast transformation of the moods of the workers. To the extent that these illusions of the workers can be broken down and a class-struggle program be made to replace them, to that extent will our union and Party be able to root themselves firmly in the masses of steel workers.

We must prepare ourselves now for these coming struggles. Only through the medium of the most ruthless, bold and far-reaching exposure of the N.R.A.; of its servile appendage, the A. F. of L.; and the whole war preparations character of the Roosevelt government; only through bringing forward the Party to the masses in the course of these attacks on the N.R.A., will we achieve our aim—our perspective for the immediate period—a mass Party and a mass Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union.

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The Open Letter and Our Tasks in the Detroit District

By JOHN SCHMIES

TO BEGIN with, we must honestly state that as yet we cannot say that a basic change is noticeable in our district, especially if we take into consideration the central task of our Party, which is to root the Party in the shops.

It is true that here and there the Party is somewhat more consolidated. It is true the Open Letter has made us conscious of what we actually have, which, we all realize, is very little. It is true that some sections, such as Dearborn—the Ford City, and our sections in the Black Belt, are making some progress, slow though it is, but what is also true is that our shop work generally has not only not increased, but as we can see today, the Auto Workers Union has actually declined.

Therefore, we must say, politically we have failed, up to the present time, to make a serious beginning in the application of the Open Letter. It is only now, through the help of the Center, that we are beginning to become alarmed at the serious situation in Detroit. We have made a thorough investigation of our shop work and the A.W.U.

In examining the above-mentioned phases of our Party activity, we find the most unsatisfactory situation—unsatisfactory in the sense that we cannot even say the progress we have made is very slow. We cannot even say that we have made any progress at all. But what we actually did find concretely is a decline—this, in the face of the increased possibilities, especially among the masses of auto workers who are searching for organization, who are increasing their militancy as a result of the growing radicalization of the workers, and who are more and more showing their opposition to the N.R.A., which intends to force upon the workers the code of the auto bosses. We must register very seriously our failure to prepare politically the Party and the movement around the Party for the building up of struggles and strikes against the auto companies and against the leadership of the A. F. of L. and the Socialist Party,

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both of which are officially charged with policing the starvation program of the N.R.A.

I think, however, that we can say today that the district leadership is only now becoming alarmed about the situation and is beginning to mobilize the Party and the movement around the Party to apply the Open Letter. While taking up very seriously our fundamental shortcomings and how to apply and carry out the Open Letter, we do not minimize for a moment some of the good points that are noticeable since the Open Letter:

1. The increased activity and loyalty of the Party comrades, especially since the Open Letter. This was demonstrated overwhelmingly in our signature campaign to place the candidates on the ballot. In four days the Party comrades and the sympathizers got over 35,000 signatures.

2. The successful auto strike that was led by our comrades in Grand Rapids.

3. The building up of a Workers' School.

4. The increased activity in and around the shops in building up contacts, in getting out factory papers and in carrying out general agitation-propaganda work, etc.

This mass activity that we are carrying on, and the hard work that the comrades are conducting, must be transformed and carried on by different and new methods. In other words, (a) The methods have to be fundamentally changed, and (b) the Party and the organizations around the Party must be politically prepared. This, then, will be the beginning of the carrying out of the Open Letter tasks.

THE SITUATION IN THE AUTO INDUSTRY

As a result of our failure the auto companies are launching a tremendous campaign to company-unionize the industry. We find also the A. F. of L. and the I.W.W. making deep inroads among sections of automobile workers, while, at the same time, the Auto Workers Union has not only not gained in membership, but has actually declined all the way down the line.

In practically all the shops, outside of the Ford Plant, both company and A. F. of L. unions are being built. Large sections of workers, primarily because of our failure to explain and expose these illusions, are very much confused as to what is going on—seeing on one side company unions, and on the other side A. F. of L. unions.

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For instance, in the Hudson Plant workers are signing up for the A. F. of L. while, at the same time, they are being encouraged by the company union, in which some participate. Here again we must say that such confusion is bound to exist as long as we remain isolated and fail to give these workers a program around which they can be organized into struggle for their daily grievances.

It is not surprising to find all this confusion among the workers organized in company or A. F. of L. unions, or among the unorganized workers, but it surely must be not only surprising, but alarming, to find Party and A.W.U. members unable to give either a clear explanation of policy or a concrete program of struggle against the company unions or against the A. F. of L. leadership.

The committee that was appointed in Detroit to carry out the N.R.A. is composed of Frank X. Martel, the president of the Detroit Federation of Labor, and Nate Smith, leader of the Socialist Party in Michigan, and a group of open-shoppers. It is true they still use radical phrases, such as, "We are for higher wages," but actually one can see in the appointment of Frank X. Martel that the committee is really an open agency in the auto industry to carry out the program of the bosses.

I have stated above that practically all organizations under the leadership of elements who are against a militant movement are growing, while, at the same time, the work of the Party in the shop, as well as the work of the A.W.U., is declining. Therefore, dealing with the given task of the Party, we must frankly state and alarm the Party into realizing that we have not yet made a serious beginning in carrying out the Open Letter in this field of activity.

IMMEDIATE STEPS FOR A MASS MOVEMENT

Mass meetings, factory gate meetings, and broad leaflet distribution become the immediate task in mobilizing the auto workers in order to prevent the companies from forcing company unions upon them. We must dramatize the necessity of the right to organize mass unions by the workers in the industry and the right to join the union of their own choice. We must explain in these meetings, speeches, leaflets and propaganda the right of the workers to build up their own organizations and to safeguard their daily interests against the program of exploitation and mass misery of the auto companies. Instead of company unions, rank and file unions of the workers. Instead of unions controlled by open-shoppers and A. F.

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of L. leaders, who endorse the slavery program of the auto bosses, a union in every shop, organized and controlled by the workers themselves. Instead of a union where the company forces upon the workers officials and representation, we must have a union where the workers elect their officials out of their own ranks, and elect those workers who have shown their loyalty and sincerity to their fellow-workers in the shop. Instead of a union that is led and guided by the A. F. of L. leadership, which is taking the lead in forcing the auto bosses' code upon the workers, we must bring forward the militant Auto Workers Union, which is fighting for an auto code *of the workers*—an auto code that demands higher wages, better working conditions, elimination of the speed-up, a union that fights relentlessly against mass lay-offs, victimization, etc., that fights for immediate relief and unemployment insurance.

This auto campaign under the leadership of the Auto Workers Union must turn the sentiment for organization away from company unions and to a real militant, mass, rank and file union. In cases where the company unions are already established, the auto workers' campaign must have as its task to elect, through a democratic election, real representatives of the workers who will not be the agents of the company against the workers, but will become the leaders of the workers against the company. The task of these representatives must be to fight for the code of the workers in the shop as against the code of the company that is being supported by Martel, Nate Smith and the committee of open-shoppers.

The Auto Workers Union must, at the same time, give the lead in this campaign to mobilize all the militant forces within the A. F. of L. unions, within the I.W.W., within the other organizations in the auto industry for a militant program based upon struggle. This is the only way to fight and stop the company unions, to fight, expose and to drive out of the industry the misleaders of labor such as Frank X. Martel, Nate Smith and leaders of the I.W.W., etc., and to build a united movement that will have as its aim to swing the rank and file members of these organizations and the unorganized auto working masses into the A.W.U.

Wherever we have contacts in the industry, shop groups must immediately be organized. These groups must become the active, leading, driving force in applying the general auto workers' campaign in their particular shop or department. Concrete issues must be developed; meetings must be called together with these groups around these issues; committees must be elected and sent to the company; demands must be popularized, and the masses must be

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rallied behind the program of these shop groups, grievance committees, action committees or whatever the workers decide to call them. The entire campaign, whether carried out generally or concretely in and around shop or department, must be reinforced with the confidence of the workers, with increased eagerness on the part of the workers to fight. We must find out ways and means to electrify the rising spirit for organization among the auto masses.

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Address to the Communist Youth

Lenin's Speech at the Third All-Russian Conference of the Russian League of Communist Youth, October 2nd, 1920.

COMRADES, I should like to speak today on the basic problems of the League of Communist Youth in connection with the kind of youth organization we must have in a socialist republic.

It is all the more important to elaborate on this point, because in a certain sense we can state that it is precisely this youth who will face the problem of setting up a Communist society. For it is obvious that the generation of workers raised in a capitalist society will under the best of circumstances be able to solve only the problem of demolishing the basis of exploitation of the old capitalist system. Under the best circumstances it will be able to solve the problems of creating a social order which will help the proletariat and the toiling masses keep the power in their hands and create a solid foundation. On such a foundation that generation which will then assume this task under the new conditions, in the era in which exploitation no longer exists, will be able to build.

And so, approaching the tasks of the youth from this viewpoint, I must say that these tasks of the youth in general and the League of Communist Youth and all other organizations in particular, can be explained in one word: their task is—study.

It is clear that this is but one word. It still does not answer the most important and most essential question,—what and how to study. And here the point is that together with the transformation of the old capitalist system, the method of educating the new generations that are to create the Communist society cannot be the old method. The teaching, upbringing and education of the youth must come out of the material left us by the old society. We can build Communism only out of that sum total of knowledge, organization and foundation and with that reservoir of human strength and abilities left us by the old society. But only by changing in a fundamental manner the method of teaching, organizing and upbringing of the youth, shall we have a guarantee that the result of the endeavors of the young generation will be the creation of a society different from the old, *i. e.,* a Communist society. That

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is why we must examine in detail the problems involved in the question of what and how our youth must study, if they really wish to deserve the name of Communist youth, and prepare themselves to continue building and to complete what we have begun.

It must be said that the first and most natural answer appears to be that the League of Youth and all youth in general who want to adhere to Communism must study Communism.

But this answer, "Study Communism", is too general. What do we need in order to study Communism? What do we have to separate from the sum total of social knowledge, in order to acquire the knowledge of Communism? Here we face a whole series of dangers which appear at every step as soon as the task of studying Communism is placed incorrectly, or when it is understood only from one angle.

It is natural at first to imagine that studying Communism means to acquire that sum of knowledge which is contained in the Communist text-books, pamphlets and works. But such a definition of the study of Communism would be crude and insufficient.

If the study of Communism should consist only in the acquisition of what is contained in Communist writings and pamphlets, then we would very easily get Communist bookworms or braggarts, and this, at every step, would bring us damage and great loss. For such people, having studied and read what is written in Communist books and pamphlets, would be unable to coordinate all this knowledge and hence be unable to act as Communists should.

One of the greatest evils and calamities left us by the old capitalist society is the complete separation of books from practical life. For example, we have books in which everything was written in great style, and these books in most instances contain the most nauseating hypocritical lies which paint Communist society for us falsely. Therefore, simply to adopt in bookish manner what is told in the books about Communism would be in the utmost sense incorrect. In our articles today, there is nothing similar to what was told before about Communism, because these writings are connected with the daily, surrounding work. But without work, without struggle, bookish knowledge of Communism out of Communist pamphlets and writings is worthless, because it would continue the old separation of theory from practice, that old separation which represented the most nauseating phase of the old bourgeoisie.

It would be even more dangerous if we should begin to adopt only slogans about Communism. If we did not understand this

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danger in time and if we did not direct all our work to prevent this danger, then the organization of a half million people, young boys and girls, who after such an education in Communism should call themselves Communists, would bring us only much useless material for Communist work.

We have before us the question, how are we to consider all this in our study of Communism? What do we have to take from the old school, from the old education? The old school declared that it aimed to produce a person with a general education who would have a broad outlook on life. We know that that was utter falsehood, because that society was based and depended on the division of people into classes, the exploiters and the exploited. It is obvious that the entire old school, being wholly permeated with a class spirit, afforded education only to the children of the bourgeoisie. Everything was worded in the interests of the bourgeoisie. In those schools, the young generation of workers and peasants was not so much educated as it was drawn to serve the interests of that same bourgeoisie. They educated the youth to make valuable slaves for themselves capable of rendering them profit but who, at the same time, would not disturb their idle peace of mind. Therefore, denying the old school, we set ourselves the task to take from it only what is necessary for us in order to promote a genuine Communist education.

Here I want to mention those reproaches and charges against the old school which we often hear and which lead us to an entirely incorrect argument. It is said that the old school was a school of text-book study, a school of dogma and regimentation, a school of cramming. This is true, but nevertheless it is necessary to select what there was in the school that was good and valuable to us and to take from it what is necessary for Communism.

The old school was a school of text-book study; it forced people to acquire a mass of unnecessary, useless, dead knowledge which stuffed their heads and turned the young generation into a series of carbon copies of city officials. But you would make a tremendous mistake if you concluded that it is possible to become a Communist without acquiring the results of human experience. It would be a mistake to think that it is sufficient to learn Communist slogans and the deductions of Communist knowledge without acquiring for one's self that sum of knowledge, the result of which is Communism. An example of how Communism resulted from the sum of human knowledge is Marxism.

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You have read and heard how the theory of Communism, Communist knowledge, chiefly created by Marx, did not remain the private property of a socialist of the nineteenth century. You know how this teaching became the theory of millions and tens of millions of proletarians in the whole world who are adopting it in their struggle against capitalism. And if we ask this question: how could the teachings of Marx gain millions and tens of millions of adherents from the most revolutionary class?—we get but one answer. Marx based himself on the lasting foundation of human knowledge gained under capitalism; having studied the laws of development of human society, Marx understood the inevitability of capitalist development which leads to Communism, and, what is more important, he proved this on the basis of the most exact, most detailed, and deepest study of capitalist society. He did this with the help and after the full acquisition of all that which past knowledge had produced. All that which had ever been produced by mankind he critically retraced, not allowing a single point to escape his attention. He retraced all that the human mind had created, subjected it to criticism, tested it in the workers' movement, and arrived at conclusions which people who are under the influence of the bourgeois ideology or bound with bourgeois prejudices cannot make.

It is necessary to keep this in mind when we speak of proletarian culture. Only through a clear understanding and a definite knowledge of culture created during the entire development of humanity, and only by reworking it is it possible to build a proletarian culture; without such an understanding we shall not solve our problems. Proletarian culture is not something that has come out of nowhere; it is not an invention of some people who call themselves specialists of proletarian culture. That is all rank foolishness. Proletarian culture must come through the regular development of those sums of knowledge which humanity has created under the yoke of capitalist society, feudalism and officialdom. All these roads and paths lead and will continue to lead to the proletarian dictatorship, just as the political economy developed by Marx showed us the human society which must come, and pointed out to us the transition to the class struggle and the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

We often hear from the representatives of our youth and from certain defenders of the new education attacks on the old school. When we hear that the old school was a school of cramming, we must tell them that we have to take what was good from the old school. We do not have to take from the old school the burdening of the memory of the youth with a mass of knowledge, nine-tenths

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of which is unnecessary, and the other tenth crippled. But that does not mean that we can suffice with Communist conclusions and learn only Communist slogans. We cannot create Communism that way. We can become Communists only when we have enriched our memories with the knowledge of all the wealth which human society has produced.

We do not need crammers, but we have to develop and complete the memories of all students with the knowledge of basic facts, or all Communism will turn into something empty, into an empty label. A Communist will be nothing but a boaster, if he does not rework to his understanding all acquired knowledge. It is not sufficient for you to acquire knowledge—you must study it in a critical manner so as not to fill up your mind with useless stuff. You will then enrich your mind with a knowledge of those facts without which we cannot have the modern educated person. If a Communist thinks of boasting of Communism on the basis of the ready deductions which he has received and without having carried through serious, difficult, and long continued work, if he has not critically analyzed the facts, such a Communist is a sorry figure indeed. Such a superficial outlook would certainly be deadly. If I know that I know little, I will insist on knowing more. But when a person insists that he is a Communist and that he does not need to know anything else, then he will not make anything that even looks like a Communist.

The old school produced servants necessary for the capitalists; the old school turned men of knowledge into men who had to write and speak to please the capitalists. That means that we must abolish it. But if we have to abolish it, if we have to destroy it, does that mean that we should not take from it all that has been gathered there by humanity which was necessary to capitalism and which is also necessary to Communism?

In place of the old authority which was carried through in bourgeois society against the wish of the majority we put forward the conscious discipline of the workers and peasants. We combine their hatred toward the old society with a decisiveness, ability, and readiness to unite and organize their strength for this struggle. We do this so that it may create a single will out of the will of the millions and hundred of millions of the crushed and the isolated all over the length and breadth of this great land. Without such a single will we shall undoubtedly be crushed. Without this solidarity, without the conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our task is hopeless. Without this unity we shall be unable to defeat the

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capitalists and landlords of the world. We will not even strengthen the foundation, let alone build a Communist society on this foundation. Also in denying the old school, in the correct and necessary hatred of it, in the readiness to destroy it, we must understand that instead of the old study methods, the old cramming methods, the old authoritative method, we must place in the foreground the ability to take for one's self the sum total of human knowledge. Then Communism will not be something that has been memorized, but will be something that you have yourself reasoned out; Communism will be those conclusions which appear inevitable from the point of view of contemporary education.

That is how we must consider the basic problems when we speak of the study of Communism. In order to clarify this still further, in connection with how to study, I will take a practical example. You all know that besides the military problem, the problem of defense of the Republic, we face the economic problem. We know that it is impossible to build a Communist society without the reconstruction of industry and agriculture, and even this reconstruction cannot be carried through in the old manner. These have to be rebuilt on a modern, up-to-date basis. You know that this basis is electricity. Only when you accomplish the complete electrification of the land, of all branches of industry and agriculture, when you have solved this problem, only then will you be able to build for yourselves that Communist society which the old generation is incapable of building.

Before you stands the task of the rebirth of the entire country, the reorganization, the establishment of agriculture and industry on a modern technical basis, all resting on the modern knowledge of technique and electricity. You understand very well that our illiterate people will now begin to use electricity. It is insufficient for them to know what electricity is: it is necessary to know how to adapt it technically to the different branches of industry and agriculture. It is necessary to learn about it for one's self and to teach it to the growing working generation. That is the problem that stands before every conscious Communist, before every young person who considers himself a Communist and clearly holds himself to account for the fact that having entered the League of Young Communists, he takes upon himself the task of helping the Party build Communism and helping the entire young generation create a Communist society. He must understand that only on the foundation of a contemporary education can he create it, and if he does not possess this knowledge, Communism will become only a wish.

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The task of the preceding generation was to destroy the bourgeoisie. Then the main task was to criticize the bourgeoisie, to develop among the masses a hatred towards it, to develop a class consciousness and an ability to solidify their power. Before the new generation stands a more complicated problem. It is insufficient to state that we have to unite all our powers to uphold the rule of the workers and peasants against the attacks of the bourgeoisie. This you have to do. This you well understand; this a Communist realizes clearly. But it is not enough. You have to build a Communist society. The first half of the work is done. The old is destroyed, as it was necessary to destroy it. It represents a heap of ruins and it was necessary to turn it into a heap of ruins. The soil is cleared, and on this soil you must pose and solve your problems. You must take possession of all modern knowledge, knowing how to turn Communism from studied formulas, soviets, prescriptions, writings and programs into that live thing that unites your immediate work. You must turn Communism into leadership for your practical work.

That is your problem which you must consider in the course of the education, the upbringing and the enlightenment of the entire youth. You must be the first builders of a Communist society among millions of builders. Every young man, every young girl, should be one. Without drawing the entire mass of working-class and peasant youth into this building of Communism, you will not construct a Communist society.

Here I naturally approach the question of how we must study Communism, what special means we must use.

I will stop for a moment on the question of Communist morals.

You have to develop yourselves into Communists. The task of the League of Communist Youth is to direct its practical activity in such a way that while studying, organizing, solidifying its ranks and struggling, our youth will develop itself and all those who follow the League of Communist Youth leadership—into Communists. The whole task of the development, education, and study of modern youth will lead to the development of a set of Communist morals. But is there a set of Communist morals in existence? Is there a Communist morality in existence? Of course, there is. Often the statement is made that we have no morals, and the bourgeoisie very often accuses the Communists of denying all morals. This is a method of confusing the mind, of throwing sand in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we deny morals, do we deny morality?

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In the sense in which the bourgeoisie preaches it, a morality derived from the will of god. In this connection we necessarily state that we do not believe in god. In the name of god spoke the church, spoke the landlords, spoke the bourgeoisie, the better to carry through their exploiting interests. At times, instead of obtaining their morals from the will of morality, from the will of god, the bourgeoisie derived them from idealist and semi-idealist phrases which always reduced themselves or led to something that was very similar to the will of god.

We deny any kind of morality taken from the non-human, non-class conception. We state that such morality is a fraud and a deception which drugs the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists.

We say that our morality is subordinated completely to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morals are derived from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The old society was based on the enslavement of the workers and peasants by the landlords and capitalists. We had to destroy that; we had to overthrow them, but for that we needed unification. No god could create such a unification for us.

Such a unification could come only from the factories and mills, only from the proletariat, educated and awakened from a deep slumber. Only then, when the class educated itself, did it launch a mass movement which led to that which we see now—to the victory of the proletarian revolution. And this took place in one of the weakest countries, which for three years defended itself against the pressure of the world bourgeoisie.

And we see how the proletarian revolution is growing in the whole world. We speak now on the basis of experience. That class alone, leading the scattered, crumbled peasantry, was able to create a consolidated power against the pressure of all exploiters. Only that class can help the toiling masses to unite, consolidate and decisively defend itself, decisively strengthen the Communist society, decisively build it.

That is why we state: for us, morality, taken outside of humanity, does not exist; it is nothing but falsehood. For us morality is subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

And of what does this class struggle consist? The overthrow of the czar, the overthrow of the capitalists, and the destruction of the class of capitalists.

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And what is the system of classes in general? It is that which allows one part of society to usurp the toil of another. If one part of society usurps all the land, we have a class of landlords and a class of peasants. If one part of society has the factories and mills, the stocks and capital, we have a class of capitalists and a class of proletarians.

It was not hard to drive out the czar—it took only a few days. It was not hard to drive out the landlords—it was possible to do this in a few months; it was not hard to drive out the capitalists. But we did not accomplish the destruction of classes; there is still the division into workers and peasants. If a peasant lives separately on a piece of land and hoards the bread that is left over, *i. e.*, bread that he does not need and that his animals do not need, while all the others remain without bread, then that peasant at once becomes an exploiter. The more bread he hoards, the more profitable it is for him, and as for the rest, let them starve: "The more they hunger, the dearer I will sell my bread." We know that it is necessary that all should work along one common plan, on common land, in common factories and mills, and along a common order of things. Is it easy to do this? You see we cannot reach a decision as easily as we drove out the czar, landlords and capitalists. Here it is necessary for the proletariat to enlighten and re-educate a part of the peasantry to win over those who are toiling peasants and destroy the resistance of those peasants who are rich and who live off the needs of others. This means that the struggle of the proletariat is not ended with the overthrow of the czar, and the driving out of the landlords and capitalists. In this lies the essence of that period which we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle continues, it has only changed its form. It is the class struggle of the proletariat to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite the scattered mass of dark peasantry into one union. The class struggle continues and it is our task to subordinate all interests to this struggle. And we subordinate to this task our Communist morality. We state: morality is that which serves to destroy the old exploiting society and which unites all toilers around the proletariat; it is that which is creating the new society of Communists.

Communist morality serves the class struggle, and unites the toilers against all exploitation and against all petty ownership. Petty ownership places in the hands of a single person what is created by the toil of all society. Land is considered common property. If from this common property, I should take for myself a certain

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piece, work on it and produce twice as much bread as I need, and speculate with the rest of the bread, if I figure that the more hungry there are, the dearer they will pay, do I act as a Communist? No, I act as an exploiter, as an owner. Against that we must conduct a struggle. If we leave it as it is, then all will roll back again, to the power of the capitalists, to the power of the bourgeoisie, as has happened repeatedly in other revolutions. And so if we are not to allow the capitalists and the bourgeoisie to return to power, such conditions must not be permitted and individual persons must not enrich themselves at the expense of others; it is necessary that the toilers should consolidate themselves with the proletariat and should create a Communist society. This is the chief duty and the basic task of the League and the organizations of Communist youth.

The old society was based on the following principle: either you rob someone or someone robs you; either you work for someone or someone works for you; either you are a slave-holder, or a slave. And it is plain that persons raised in such an environment, we may say, from the cradle, adopt just such psychology, habits, understanding: either a slave-holder or a slave. Such is the petty bourgeois, the petty official, the professional—myself first and the devil take the hindmost.

If I work this piece of land, the other person's condition is none of my business. If he starves, why, all the better, I shall be able to sell my bread dearer. If I hold my little job as physician, engineer, teacher, office worker, I do not care about anyone else. Perhaps if I hustle, I shall please the ones in power, save my little job, and I may even advance and become an employer. Such psychology, and such ideology, a Communist cannot have. When the workers and peasants proved they could defend themselves and create a new society with their own strength, right there we had the beginning of the new Communist upbringing; an upbringing in the midst of struggle against the exploiters, an upbringing in close union with the proletariat against the egoist petty-bourgeoisie, against that psychology and those habits that say: I am out for my profits, and as for anything else, it is none of my business.

This is the answer to the question: How should the young, growing generation study Communism?

It can study Communism only by intertwining every step of its study, rearing, and education, with the increasing struggle of the proletariat and toilers against the old exploiting society. When they speak to us of morality we say: for a Communist, morality is all a part of this consolidated discipline and conscious mass struggle against exploiters. We do not believe in an eternal morality, and

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we expose all lies and fairy tales about morality. Morality serves the purpose of elevating human society, of ridding it of the exploitation of labor.

In order to bring such a society into being we need a generation of youth capable of becoming the persons able to cope with a situation of disciplined, desperate struggle with the bourgeoisie. Such a struggle develops real Communists; to that struggle, and with it, the youth must subordinate and connect every phase of its study, education and upbringing.

The development of Communist youth does not consist of feeding it on all sorts of sugar-coated speeches and rules about morality. That is not the content of rearing. When people saw how their fathers and mothers lived under the whip of the landlords and capitalists, when they themselves experienced the sufferings which were heaped upon those who began to fight against the exploiters, when they saw what sacrifices it cost to continue this struggle so as to defend the victories, when they saw what bloodthirsty enemies the capitalists and landlords are—then they were brought up by their very conditions as Communists.

At the root of Communist morality, there lies the continuation and completion of Communism. That is the basis of Communist rearing, education, and study. That is the gist of the answer to the question, how must we study Communism.

We do not believe in study, rearing, and education, if they are to be relegated to the school only and separated from the turmoil of life. As long as the workers and peasants remain enslaved by the landlords and capitalists, the generation of youth remains blind and unenlightened. But our schools must give youth the foundation of knowledge, the ability to work out an independent Communist outlook, and turn them into educated persons. They must make of the people studying in them, participants in the struggle for freedom from exploiters. The League of Communist Youth will be true to its name only when it connects every step of its study, rearing, and education with participation in the general struggle of all toilers against exploiters. You know very well that as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic, while at the same time the old bourgeois systems exist in the rest of the world, we are weaker than they and are constantly threatened with a new attack. Only if we master consolidation of purpose and singleheartedness shall we be victorious in the battle and really be unconquerable. Therefore to be a Communist means to organize and unite the entire growing generation, to give an example of development and

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discipline in this struggle. Then will you be able to begin and lead to a finish the construction of the Communist society.

To make this clearer, let me give an example. We call ourselves Communists. What is a Communist? *Communist* is a Latin word. Communist society means: everything is common property: land, factories, labor. That is Communism.

Can there be common labor, when people are enslaved by landlords and capitalists, each one of whom has established his property on a separate piece of land? That is impossible. It does not fall from heavan. We are not dealing here with the rewriting of an old book; no one would believe a book. It is necessary to work on this, suffer it, create it. Common labor is created in the process of struggle. Here it is a question of experience in life. When Kolchak and Denikin were coming from Siberia and from the East, the peasants were on their side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks bought their bread at a fixed price. But when the peasants of Siberia and the Ukraine experienced the government of Kolchak and Denikin, they saw that the peasants had no choice; they could follow either the capitalists and be handed over into slavery to the landlord, or go with the worker. They could go with the worker who does not promise heaven on earth, who demands an iron discipline and steadfastness in hard struggle, but who is the only one to lead them out of the slavery of landlordism and capitalism. When the workers and peasants understood this from their personal experience in this hard school of life, then they became conscious supporters of Communism. The League of Communist Youth must make such experiences the basis of all its activities. I answered the questions, what we should study, what we must take from the old school and old knowledge. I will also try to answer the question, how we have to study. Only by connecting every step of activity in school, every step of development, education and study, uninterruptedly with the struggle of all toilers against the exploiters.

In a few examples taken from experiences in the work of a few youth organizations, I will show you clearly how this nurture of Communism must be brought about. Everybody speaks of the liquidation of illiteracy. You know that it is impossible to build Socialism in an illiterate land. It is not sufficient for the Soviet power to give out orders, or for the Party to issue a certain slogan, or for us to assign a definite number of the best workers to this task. It is necessary that the entire young generation should undertake this task. It will be a real Communist act when the youth, the young

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boys and girls who are in the League of Youth, will say: "This is our task, we will unite and go to the villages, to liquidate illiteracy so that the growing generation will not have any illiterates." Our aim is to devote the self activity of the growing generation to this very task. You know that it is impossible to turn Russia from a dark, illiterate country into a literate one over night, but if this task is undertaken by the League of Youth, if the entire youth will work for the good of all, then this League, embracing 400,000 young boys and girls, has the right to call itself a League of Communist Youth. The task of the League consists also in this, that while it is acquiring extensive knowledge, it must help that youth which cannot by itself be freed from the darkness of illiteracy. To be members of the League of Youth, means to direct the work so as to give one's work, one's strength to the common good. That is the essence of Communist education. Only in the course of such work does a young man or woman become a real Communist. Only to the extent that they reach practical achievements through this work do they become Communists.

Let us take the work in the suburban gardens. Is that not a task of the League of Communist Youth? The nation hungers—in the factories and mills there is hunger. In order to save ourselves from hunger, we must develop gardens. But agriculture is still conducted as of old. It is necessary that the more conscious among you should tackle this. You will then see that the gardens will grow in numbers, their area will grow, the results will improve. In this task the League of Communist Youth must take an active part. Every unit and every cell of the League must look upon this work as its own task.

The League of Communist Youth must be a Shock Troop, which gives help in all work, shows its initiative, and begins. The League must be of such character that any worker would see in it persons whose studying he will probably not trust at once but in whose living work, in whose activities he would actually see the people who show him the correct path. If the League of Communist Youth in all districts is not able to set up its work in this manner, it means that it is wandering into the old bourgeois path. Our education must be connected with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters—to help the workers solve the problems which arise out of the study of Communism.

The members of the League must utilize every free hour to improve gardens or to organize the education of the youth in some factory or mill. We want to turn Russia from a poor, wretched

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land into a rich land. And it is necessary that the League of Communist Youth unite its education, its rearing and its study with the toil of the workers and peasants, that it do not lock itself in its schools and be satisfied with the reading of Communist text-books and pamphlets. Only in the process of collective toil with the workers and peasants is it possible to become a real Communist. And it is necessary for all to see that everyone who enters the League of Communist Youth becomes literate and in addition knows how to toil. When all see how we have driven out from the old school the old regimentation and replaced it with a strict Communist discipline, that every young person goes to participate in the Red Sundays, that he utilizes every suburban establishment in order to help the population—the nation will look upon work in a different manner than it was looked upon in the past.

The task of the League of Communist Youth is to organize in the village or in its neighborhood and help in such work as the guaranteeing of cleanliness or distribution of food. How was this done in the old capitalist society? Each boss worked only for himself and no one looked to see whether there were any aged or sick, or whether the whole of the housework fell on the shoulders of the woman so that she found herself in a crushed and slavish condition. Who must struggle against this? The League of Communist Youth, who should say: We will change this, we are organizing squads of young people who will be busy distributing food and systematically canvassing the homes, who will act in an organized form for the benefit of society, correctly distributing its forces and showing that toil must be organized through toil.

It is impossible to expect that the generation that is now nearly fifty years old will see the Communist society. By that time this generation will be dead. But the generation whose age is now fifteen, that generation will see the Communist society. That generation will itself build it. It must know that the whole task of its life is the building of that society. In the old society work was carried on by separate families, and no one unified that work so that those workers might make a single army. We must establish every phase of work, no matter how dirty or hard in such a manner that every worker and peasant will look upon himself thus: I am part of a great army of labor and will be able to build my life myself; I will be able to establish order without landlords and capitalists. It is necessary that the League of Communist Youth educate the masses from an early age, the age of twelve, in the process of conscious and disciplined labor. In this manner we can count on the solution of these problems which are now set before us. We must figure

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that we need no less than ten years for the electrification of the country, so that our pauperized land will be served along the latest technical lines. And so, that generation which is now fifteen years old and which will in from ten to twenty years live in the Communist society, that generation must organize all of its study problems so that every day in any village, in any city, the youth will solve in a practical manner this or the other task of common labor, no matter how small, no matter how simple. To the extent that this will occur in the village, to the extent that competition will be raised, to the extent that the youth will show that it can unite its labors—to that extent will the success of Communist construction be guaranteed. Only by examining every one of our steps, only by questioning ourselves in everything we are doing to become united toilers; only through this lengthy process will the League of Communist Youth unite the half million of its members into one family and awaken a common respect toward itself.

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The Work of Factory Nuclei

NOTE: *We are reprinting the letter from the Org. Department of the E. C. C. I. confirmed by the Polit-Secretariat which was sent to all the Parties in the beginning of* 1930. *In connection with the discussion of the Open Letter adopted by the Extraordinary Conference of our Party, this letter on factory work is of the greatest immediate importance.*—EDITORS.

IN FEBRUARY, 1930, the Presidium of the E. C. C. I. proposed, by way of a fundamental directive, to all the Communist Parties "to give a further impetus to agitational propagandist work and to ensure a change in the forms and methods of work in accordance with the tasks connected with the leadership of the mass demonstrations of the proletariat (strikes, unemployed movement, demonstrations), of the agricultural laborers and the poorest sections of the peasantry (within the country, as well as in the colonies), and with carrying out the necessary preparation of these mass demonstrations."

The way in which this directive has been carried out has shown that all the Communist Parties, without a single exception, must work more energetically for the consolidation of factory nuclei, because without an actual reorganization of the Party on a factory nucleus basis, this directive cannot be fully carried out.

Owing to ever growing repression, Communist work in the factories is becoming more and more difficult. However, these great difficulties can be overcome. What has been done in this direction by the Communist Party of Germany can serve as an object lesson. During the last election campaign, the C. P. of Germany established 188 new Party and 56 Young Communist League factory nuclei. Not content with this success, the C. P. of Germany worked up the Berlin metal workers' strike on the basis of intensive work in the factories. It is above all due to the energetic work of the Party directly in the factories that this strike movement has developed on such revolutionary and organized lines.

In summing up the results of the election campaign, the Central Committee of the C. P. of Germany declares "that it is quite possible to enlist the sympathy of the workers for our policy and tactics in a relatively short time, provided efficient Bolshevik work is done." This inference, based on the experience of a well conducted suc-

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cessful campaign, must constitute the basis of the practical daily work of all Communist Parties.

THE PRINCIPAL SHORTCOMINGS IN THE WORK OF FACTORY NUCLEI AND HOW TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE

The following are the major shortcomings that come to light in the work of the factory nuclei of all Communist Parties, even of the strongest ones, such as the C. P. of Germany:

1. There are very few factory nuclei and they are not organized in all the factories.

2. The majority of factory nuclei are to be found in small enterprises. In the large factories there are either no nuclei at all or these are very weak and uninfluential.

3. The nuclei are as a rule not very active and are torn away from the daily life of the factory.

4. Among the working class members of the Party there is a strong tendency to avoid activity in their nuclei and consequently not all of them join their nuclei. Thus in Czechoslovakia workers constituted on July 1, 1930, according to the figures of the Central Committee, 57 per cent of the members, but only 14 per cent were organized in factory nuclei.

5. The factory nuclei as a rule are not linked up with the Communist fractions in their unions.

6. The work of the factory nuclei is badly linked up, or not at all, with the other activities of the Party, in view of the inadequate attention of the leading Party organs to it.

In order to alter this state of affairs, in order to convert the factory nuclei into basic organizations of the Communist Parties, these shortcomings must be eliminated. The first thing that must be done, of course, is to change the position of the factory nuclei in the general system of Party work. At the present time the position of the factory nuclei in an overwhelming majority of Communist Parties may be described as follows: All big political campaigns conducted by the Parties as a rule have but a very poor cooperation of the factory nuclei, if any at all. The methods customarily used in the political campaigns of the Communist Parties are the old methods brought from the social democratic parties which have already been many times condemned by the Communist International. These methods are: general agitation, public meet-

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ings, the participation of Party members in the carrying out of campaigns in their residential neighborhoods and not where they are employed, and the fact that the national Party press and national Party agitators are the principal driving factors in campaigns. Upon the completion of a campaign the leading organs sum up the results, they point out self-critically the mistaken methods that were used, and the major conclusion is made that the next political campaign will have to be conducted on the factory basis. But the next campaign is carried on in the same way. The explanation given usually by the Party workers is that the given political campaign requires an exertion of all the Party forces and a maximum utilization of the whole Party apparatus. They say that because of the weakness of the factory nuclei it is impossible to carry out a campaign on the factory basis. But the fact that the factory nuclei stand aside during campaigns has as its inevitable outcome the failure to reorganize the Parties on the factory nucleus principle. Thus the Parties are unable to bring the slogans to the notice of the fundamental mass of the workers, and to expose properly the treacherous and counter-revolutionary work of the social-democrats, reformists, and fascists.

The factory nuclei, not getting definite tasks from the Party, remain sickly organizations, playing no important role in the life of the Party organizations. This state of affairs in the factory nuclei is to a great extent due to the ever-growing repressions against the work of Communists in factories. But the chief reason for this state of affairs is the existence of social democratic traditions in the daily work of the Communist Parties. A real reorganization of the Parties on a factory nucleus basis, and consequently their genuine Bolshevization, cannot be thought of without a complete liquidation of these traditions.

NECESSARY CHANGES IN THE METHODS OF WORK OF THE PARTY COMMITTEES

The Central Committees of the Communist Parties must do their utmost in order that the whole system of Party leadership be directed to the factory. First of all the Party press must take this turn. The national and all local organs of the Party should establish direct connections with the factories. The material they publish should reflect most of all the current struggles of the workers in the factories. Moreover, these articles must be certainly written in simple language, so as to be understood by workers who are not yet well up in various specific political terms and formulae. The political articles dealing with the line of the Communist Interna-

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tional, with decisions of congresses and of the Central Committees, should not be couched in abstract phrases and general theoretical formulations but should as a rule present the concrete tasks confronting the Party members and sympathizers in the factories, illustrating how the general line of the Party is to be put into daily practice, how that line is to be constantly explained to the masses in the factories, how the masses should be organized for the struggle under Communist leadership on the basis of that line. Apart from these general articles, the Party papers should contain communications from the locals and from the factories. The most intensive work must be undertaken to extend the network of worker correspondents, to organize worker correspondent study circles in all factories, to attract to that movement not only Party members but non-Party sympathizers, revolutionary social-democratic workers and members of reformist unions. Apart from the worker correspondents, groups of friends of the Party press should be organized in the factories, as, for instance, the group of *Humanite* friends in France. The worker-correspondent circles may join these groups of friends of the Party press and, on the other hand, the groups of friends should select their worker correspondents to supply the Party press with information on what is going on in the factory. Mail sent out from factories should as a rule not be the work of some individual correspondent. Sympathizers in the factory should be invited to help in writing, and, if police conditions permit, the correspondence should be read at group and general meetings of workers in the departments, so that corrections may be made and the desires of the workers stated. If the police conditions permit, the editors of Party publications should call more or less regularly and frequently conferences of worker correspondents, inviting also other workers to attend, so as to consider together with them the necessary improvements of the papers with a view of bringing them closer to the working masses. In a word, everything must be done that the working class may find in the Party organ a real workers' paper and that, on the other hand, the Party organ should use plain language and deal with questions which are near to and understood by the broad masses of workers.

What has been said with regard to Party papers fully holds good, but in a different form, with regard to Party committees and especially those which have to deal directly with the factories. *The factory nuclei can be strengthened and made to become the basic organs of the Party provided the Party committees assist them in their daily work.* For this a radical change in methods used by the Party committees for routine work is necessary. Instead of bureaucratic connections through circulars the Party committees must establish direct

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and live contact with the factories and factory nuclei. The Party committees must use every possibility for that. In the newspaper offices of legal Party papers there should always be a representative of the Party committee when worker correspondents are expected to come, which is usually before and after working hours. The representatives of the Party committees should most carefully gather information through them on what is going on in the factories and give them the necessary advice and instructions concerning further work. The same is true with regard to legal unions and their publications. Members of the Communist fractions in the unions should be in close touch with the corresponding Party committees; they should regularly inform the latter on what is of most interest in the factories, on the sentiment of the union membership, etc. Through the Communist fractions in the unions the Party committees should establish connections with the factories by getting in touch with the most revolutionary union members. On the other hand the factory nuclei have to establish new connections through the Communist fraction of the union in order to get leadership and to strengthen their organization in the factory. It is particularly important for the Party committee to be able to give systematic and direct instructions to the factory nuclei in their daily work. For this purpose all Party committees in charge of the work of the factory nuclei must establish regular contact through meetings of their representatives with representatives of the factory nuclei, say every second or third day, and in time of preparations for struggle, even more often. Such meetings with representatives of factory nuclei are particularly important for the large factories where, owing to factory rules, members of the nuclei working in different departments, cannot get together and no meetings or conferences can be organized. In such instances the Party committee is the natural organizing center for the separate workshops and departments. As far as police conditions permit, regular conferences (legal, semi-legal, illegal) should be organized of representatives of factory nuclei for the purpose of an exchange of experience of daily work and of laying down the immediate tasks in carrying out the instructions of the leading organs. Such conferences are particularly necessary when big political campaigns are in preparation or when big demonstrations or strikes are about to take place. In order to lead all the big political campaigns on a factory basis the plan of such campaigns should be first drawn up and discussed at meetings of the active Party members of the factories. It is quite natural that when the problem of dealing with the factories is met and when the tasks are formulated on the basis of concrete demands and of the needs to intensify Party work in the factories, that that will bring about a cor-

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responding reorganization of all Party forces. This will bring the Party closer to the factory, and will put a stop to the old traditions and methods in the carrying out of political campaigns.

THE TASKS OF THE PARTY COMMITTEES WITH REGARD TO INSTRUCTING FACTORY NUCLEI

In the matter of giving daily instructions to the factory nuclei, steps must first of all be taken to prevent bureaucratic formalism in giving instructions. It is to be regretted that at the present time this happens to be the case too often. When investigations are made as to what the factory nuclei do, the Party committees take as a criterion the formal sides in the activities of the factory nuclei: they inquire as to whether the nuclei meet regularly, as to whether there is regular attendance, as to whether all questions mentioned in the decisions of the leading Party organs are put on the agenda, etc. It is easy to imagine a factory nucleus which lives very accurately up to all these formalities but which is nevertheless not a genuine nucleus of a Bolshevik Party. What the constitution of the Communist International puts forward as a principal demand to the factory nucleus is that it be first of all an organ linking up the Party with the masses of the working class. Therefore when we investigate the activities of a factory nucleus this must be borne in mind. It is desirable that the nucleus meets regularly, that its meetings are regularly attended by all members; but it is absolutely essential that a factory nucleus *get together every time there is some movement in the factory, every time when the workers are about to strike, etc., regardless of plans and schedules.* Party committees and the leadership of factory nuclei must take all the necessary measures to insure that at all workers' meetings where questions connected with the struggle for their immediate demands, preparations of demonstrations, strikes, etc., are discussed, there shall be an attendance of Party members and sympathizers specially instructed by the nucleus and the Party committee as to what should be done at these meetings, what line should be followed, etc. This fundamental principle must be understood by each Party instructor and each active member of the factory nucleus.

In connection with this the factory nucleus must be in closest contact with all that concerns the daily struggle of the workers in the given factory. It must closely follow all that is going on in the factory, it must watch the work of the administration, the work of the various political organizations and groups among the workers, the changing sentiment of the workers, and use the slightest opportunity in order to increase the Party's influence among the workers and to mobilize the latter for the struggle in their class in-

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terests. Meetings of Party nuclei must by all means discuss all the general Party problems, but at the same time one should take into consideration the manner in which these instructions are to be concretely applied to the given factory, what auxiliary organizations have to be organized in the factory, what concrete tasks have to be assigned to each individual member of the nucleus. On the other hand, when discussing the conditions in the factory, or the sentiment of the workers, etc., the factory nucleus must consider the manner in which the given state of affairs or the given sentiment is to be used for increasing the Party's influence in the factory, what must be done and what particular tasks must be given to each member.

THE FIRST STEPS IN THE ORGANIZATION OF A FACTORY NUCLEUS

One of the most difficult points in the organization of a Party on a factory basis is the creation of factory nuclei in factories where there are no Party members or where there are only one or two. As the matter stands today when, as a rule, the Communist Parties have no, or very small, nuclei in the big factories, as a result of which they can play no important role in the development of the Communist movement in the factory, they are confronted with the essential and urgent task of immediately setting up strong factory nuclei in all big factories.

The first step in creating a factory nucleus in an enterprise where no nucleus exists is to find out through the fractions of mass organizations (Y.C.L., trade union, Red aid, sport organizations, delegate meetings) whether any of their members belong to the Party or are its sympathizers. If no Party members are found through the employment of this method it is necessary to find through the fractions of the mass organizations working class sympathizers and with their assistance organize a nucleus in the factory. The question of setting up a factory group should also be first taken up with the fractions of the mass organizations, especially the trade union fraction, and then through the medium of that group contact should be established with workers sympathizing with the Party, with whose help steps can be taken to organize a factory nucleus. For the establishment of connections with the factories one should also make use of possibilities such as calling conferences of electors supporting the candidate list of the red factory committee, conferences of readers and friends of the Party and revolutionary trade union press, etc. Finally, in some instances, the question has to be considered of sending Party members to a given factory where they must try to get jobs.

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The last-named methods can be applied with benefit in relation to the plantations, sugar refineries, distilleries, etc., which are very often far from industrial centers and which usually employ the most backward sections of the proletariat and semi-proletariat.

When organizing such nuclei, the street nuclei existing in the neighboring districts should also be used. With the help of these street nuclei contact can be established with the workers of the given enterprise who can be met when leaving or going to work, in the restaurants and lunch rooms and also at home.

The forms of contact with the revolutionary minded workers may be of various kinds, beginning with presumably chance conversations in the course of which the political tendency of the companion can be discovered. One may start a conversation on the latest news in the papers or take walks during which political conversations are held with individual workers, or distribute literature, Party papers, leaflets, the factory paper, etc.

In some factories it may be expedient to organize shock troops of members of several factory and street nuclei with the special purpose of getting in touch with workers of a given factory and of organizing a nucleus there. In setting up such special groups the specific conditions of the given factory must be borne in mind and the personal make-up of the groups carefully considered. For such a group it is best to select comrades who, because of their residential district and work have better opportunities of getting into contact with the workers of the given enterprise. It is also highly important that the members of such groups quit work when the given factory group begins to work. Finally, it is necessary that the selected comrades know roughly the nature of the given factory and the specific needs and questions of interest to the workers.

Experience in some countries has shown that the factory paper is a good method of establishing contact with factories having no nuclei and no Party members. The Party committee usually appoints a comrade whose business it is to organize a nucleus in the given factory. After a careful study of the situation in the enterprise and the question of interest to the workers, he issues a factory paper based on material concerning that factory, containing a number of concrete and practical suggestions how Communist sympathizers can organize a Party nucleus in the factory without waiting for a Party organizer, what they must do, etc.

As soon as one succeeds by all possible means in establishing contact with from three to five workers in the factory, they should im-

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mediately constitute a nucleus. This nucleus, regardless of its numerical weakness, should immediately proceed with the establishment of connections, energetically try to get more members into the Party, and take steps to establish connections with departments and sections in the factory where there are no Party members yet. The Party committee should carefully follow this work and untiringly help the comrades, correct their mistakes as they occur, and if necessary attach new workers to them for that purpose.

Naturally, every opportunity must be used to establish new connections in the factory. However, efforts should be made to establish first of all connections with the most important departments of the factory. There are in each factory to be found departments of first and secondary importance. The former decide the fate of the latter: if for some reason they do not function, the others follow suit. It is therefore highly important to have connections with and to organize nuclei in the departments which are of first importance in the factory.

THE NUCLEUS OF A DEPARTMENT IS THE BASIC LINK

The departmental nucleus is the principal link in the factory nucleus. Some comrades believe that departmental nuclei can be organized only in Parties which have strong and big factory nuclei. That is wrong. Party work in the factory always begins in the department. A Party member cannot work in a factory in general; he works in some particular department and in one of the shifts.

What has a Party member who has got into a factory for the purpose of organizing a factory nucleus to do? First of all he must acquaint himself with the department and find out who his fellow workers are. First of all he must find out whether there are any Party members or sympathizers. This can be done in the following way: he can find out from the Party committee whether there are any Party members in the given department and from the trade union fraction whether there are any workers with revolutionary inclinations. He can get similar information from fractions of other mass organizations, Workers International Relief, International Red Aid, Tenant Leagues, sport societies, etc. The next step is to get in touch with the Party members and other revolutionary workers, to organize a revolutionary group together with them with the purpose of founding a departmental nucleus. When this is done the group has to find out exactly how the workers stand with regard to political questions, who of them belongs to the reformist union, who is a member of the social-democratic party, who of a fascist

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organization, etc. That is absolutely necessary to know for each Party member and for each departmental nucleus. In starting their Party work in the department the Communists must naturally first of all approach the non-Party revolutionary workers, and later make overtures to revolutionary workers belonging to the reformist unions and to the social-democratic party, and also to individual fascist workers.

Simultaneously with work in their own department, Party members must establish and strengthen connections with the workers of other departments. If there are Party members only in one department, this department nucleus must fulfill all the functions of a general factory nucleus. With the help of the Party committee and the support of the fractions of mass organizations, it must do everything to get into contact with all the workshops and departments of the factory. In its work for the whole factory such a departmental nucleus must steadily pursue the course of getting under its influence the majority of the workers of its own department, and of becoming there an organ acknowledged by all the workers as leader of the struggle of the working class and champion of its interests.

THE FACTORY NUCLEUS—AN ILLEGAL ORGANIZATION

In all capitalist countries the factory nucleus can work only as an illegal organization. Therefore its work and the work of every member of the factory nucleus must be conducted in a manner to keep any police agency in the factory as much as possible in the dark with regard to the Party membership of workers employed in the factory, and especially with regard to the concrete work carried on by the Communist Party in the domain of political propaganda and agitation among the workers and the organizational consolidation of the influence of the Party in the factory. That is why it is essential to observe elementary conspirative rules in the work of the factory nucleus. This applies equally to countries with illegal or legal Communist Parties. In countries with illegal Communist Parties connection between the nucleus and the Party committee meets with complications. In order to guarantee this connection, there must be, side by side with the establishment of a strong illegal apparatus and a very effective apparatus for illegal connections, full utilization of all legal and semi-legal possibilities, in the first instance, utilization of the fractions of legal and semi-legal mass organizations, municipal fractions, etc. But even in countries with legal Communist Parties, the Party committees which control the work of the factory nuclei,

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must give full instructions to the members of factory nuclei with regard to conspirative rules in factory Party work.

Some of the conspiracy rules to be mentioned are as follows:

1. Party members must not go by their own names but use pseudonyms at the meetings of the nucleus, in discussing Party affairs, and especially when drawing up minutes and similar documents.

2. As a rule never discuss Party matters in the presence of people you do not know or such who are known to have connections with the police.

3. Do not organize Party meetings and conferences publicly. Party meetings should be held where there is least chance for outsiders to intrude and listen to what is going on. Therefore, one must take into consideration that, as a rule, factory nucleus meetings will have to be held more often than not, on other premises. But this should certainly not alter the character of their work as liaison organs between the Party and the workers of the various factories and works.

4. Make sure you have no Party documents with you when going to a meeting, so that it cannot be proved that it is a Communist meeting.

5. Do not boast before everybody in the factory that you belong to the Party.

When instructing members of factory nuclei along these lines the Party committees should at the same time make it definitely understood that conspiracy must by no means cut the nucleus away from the masses of workers in the factories. While taking precautionary measures against being detected by the police and their agents, Party nuclei in the factories must constantly let the workers know of their existence: they must publish leaflets, factory newspapers; organize meetings, etc. The most important duty of factory nuclei is to make the factory workers realize that the factory nucleus reacts immediately to every event in the factory and country. They must bring forward on behalf of the Party suitable organizational slogans connected with the struggle for the interest of the working class. While taking the necessary precautionary measures so as not to attract to themselves the attention of the police agents, Party members must not only carry on persistent daily work in order to bring new sections of workers into the ranks of the Party and into the sphere of Party influence, but they must also, whenever the situation demands (for instance, excitement among the workers in connection with a mine explosion), instruct active members of the nuclei

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to appear in their true colors before the workers even at the risk of arrest and dismissal.

RECRUITING WORK

Party members must be most persistent in molding the minds of individuals on political questions, taking advantage of the slightest opportunity for that—the dinner hour, the way home, special walks with individual workers who display interest in the Communist Party and in the revolutionary trade unions. *In recruiting members at the time of mass campaigns the Communist Parties must endeavor right now to carry on daily agitation among individuals to join the Party in the factories.* The existing factory nuclei can be strengthened and new ones organized primarily and chiefly by means of persistent individual recruiting work in the factories. The influence of the Party can be given organized form with the help of such work, and the new elements who will join the Party as a result, will not be people who enter after an enthusiastic speech by some Communist orator only to withdraw the next day, but will be sound revolutionary elements with a clear understanding as to why they join the Communist Party.

If working class members will be recruited on the basis, not only of a simple explanation of the aims and objects of the Communist Party, but also by being drawn as sympathizing workers into the daily work of the basic factory organizations, the best results will be obtained, the most progressive elements of the working class will join the Party, and people capable of carrying out the instructions of the Party in the factory with regard to the mobilization of the masses and their preparation for the common struggle of the working class will be best able to do so.

THE STRUCTURE OF A FACTORY NUCLEUS AND ITS WORKING METHODS

In order that the factory nucleus may work properly it must be properly organized. It is very hard to bring about such organization now in view of the fierce terror of the employers and the police in the factory. The practice in some Parties is to break up the Party organization in the factory into groups of 5 or 10 to escape repressive measures. This may be used in some instances, but it should by no means be applied mechanically. It is quite natural that wherever the factory nucleus is numerically weak or where it is impossible for political reasons to organize a meeting of all members of the nucleus, that there should be meetings of small groups, and that the

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nucleus should be broken up into several parts. But this must not be done in a routine, mechanical way. In the first place, a group, no matter how big or small, must represent a certain section of the factory, say, one workshop, one department, one section, or one shift brigade. There is no use organizing groups, however small, of people who do not work in the same department, because they will not be in a position to be always in touch with each other.

The basic principle to be guided by in the organization of a group is that of having the closest possible quick and sure connections. The main division in a factory nucleus is naturally to be found in the workshops, in the nucleus of each workshop. A nucleus in the workshop can in turn be broken up into several groups, each of which would consist of workers working close to each other or in the same shift, so that they would be always in touch with each other. Each group should have a strict division of labor, of Party work above all, having an organizer whose business would be to keep the group in touch with the factory nucleus. Each member of the group should have some task to perform. The tasks are to be assigned at meetings, at which it should be pointed out what each member must do to carry out the instructions of the superior Party organs and to increase the Party's influence in that part of the factory where the group happens to work. The members of the group should come together every day, if only for a short while. They should have a code whereby the members would be able to inform each other concerning the work that has to be done on the job without rousing suspicion among the stool pigeons and without being noticed by non-Party workers or members of the social-democratic party.

The ability to maintain contact in time of work, to transmit quickly the necessary instructions to all members in the workshop, and through them to all sympathizers, is one of the major points of inside organization of each section of the factory nucleus, and such order should be established inside each department and workshop. The duty of an organizer of a departmental nucleus should also be to make connections with the nuclei of other departments and workshops and, if that is impossible, to be directly in touch with the corresponding Party committee. The Party Committee which has direct charge of the work of the factory nuclei establishes connections with the factory nucleus and at the same time also with all the departmental nuclei. Such connection is absolutely necessary, so that in case the bureau of the factory nucleus is discovered, the Party committee may be able directly to get in touch with the departmental nuclei and to re-establish connections with the factory organization through them. The organizational structure of a departmental nucleus is therefore the following: in-

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side of each department or workshop, depending upon the technical peculiarities in the organization of that department and depending upon the number of Party members working there, there should be several organized groups. These groups constitute a departmental nucleus.

Commensurate with its numerical strength, the departmental nucleus has its own organizer or bureau elected at the general meeting of the factory nucleus or at the meeting of group representatives (if the departmental nucleus has a large membership, and police conditions make it difficult to bring together many Party members). The departmental nuclei constitute the factory nucleus. At the head of each factory nucleus there is a bureau elected at a general members' meeting (or at a meeting of representatives of the departmental nuclei, if the spying system makes a general meeting of the nucleus impossible). The bureau of the factory nucleus should consist of the best Communist members of the nucleus, and it should consist of three or five members and two candidates. As such it should guide with the assistance of the departmental organizers the daily activity of the factory nucleus with the direct support of the corresponding Party committee.

The bureau of the factory nucleus should meet regularly with representatives of the departmental nuclei to discuss questions of general Party work in the factory, to review the work of various departmental nuclei and to draw up the immediate tasks of the factory organization as a whole and of each departmental nucleus separately. When dividing the work among the members of the factory nucleus, work among the working youth and women workers must be considered. The Party nucleus in the factory must make itself responsible for energetic help to the Y. C. L. with regard to the establishment of a strong Y. C. L. nucleus in the factory, and also with regard to the organization of women workers' delegate meetings, which should be a means of drawing these women into the Party and proletarian mass organizations.

UTILIZATION BY THE FACTORY NUCLEUS OF LEGAL AND SEMI-LEGAL POSSIBILITIES

The factory nucleus should have all kinds of legal and semi-legal subsidiary organizations, trade unions, educational groups, sport societies, etc., to rely upon in its current work. The trade union organizations, as the most important transmission belt for the establishment of connections between the factory nucleus and the

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working masses in the given factory, are of greatest significance. In order that the factory nucleus may be able to rely on the trade union organizations in the factory the trade unions must be reorganized on a basis of the employment of their members, according to the decision of the Fifth Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions. It is the business of the factory nuclei to take the initiative in this reorganization with the help of its members who belong to the union. The factory nucleus should be the backbone of the respective trade union group in the factory. Backed by the factory trade union group the factory nucleus can spread its influence over the rest of the workers, drawing them into the struggle for immediate demands and explaining in the course of that struggle the general line and the tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement and Communist Party.

When discontent is to be observed among the workers in connection with the factory rules, wage cuts, government acts, socialist treachery, etc., the factory nucleus should take the initiative in setting up the necessary fighting organs to make arrangements for a strike, to fight against a lockout, to prepare for demonstrations, etc., making use of the accumulated international experience to be found in the resolution of the Strassburg Conference on strike tactics, in the decisions of the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., and in the Org. Resolution of the Fifth Congress of the R.I.L.U. The factory nucleus should make full use also of such organizations as International Red Aid (I.L.D.), W.I.R., Tenants' League, sport organizations, etc. The factory nucleus should seriously take up the question of organizing in the factory proletarian self-defense—pickets in time of strikes; defense corps to protect speakers, headquarters of the revolutionary unions and the Communist Party, and demonstrators from police and fascist attacks.

The factory paper is the best means in the hands of the factory nucleus for spreading Party slogans among the workers in the factory and for mobilizing them around these slogans. The value of factory papers is greatly underestimated in many Communist Parties. They are not very widespread and there are even factories where nuclei have been in existence for a long time, without having papers of their own. On the basis of international experience it may be categorically stated that the Communist Parties cannot be reorganized on a factory basis unless factory papers are used for the purpose. Under the conditions now prevailing in the factories where no big meetings can be held, the factory paper is the best means whereby instructions and slogans of the Party can be circulated in the factories. For this purpose the factory nucleus, as well as the

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corresponding Party committee in charge of the factory nuclei, must devote much attention to the factory paper. The nuclei themselves, and not the Party committees, as is now the case in all Parties in very many instances, should be rallied by papers. The Party committees should guide the work of the factory nuclei in issuing their papers. Politically developed Party members with a fair education should be attached to the factory nuclei to help them in this work. The Party committees should systematically consider the content of the factory papers, review them, have them discussed at meetings of the departmental and factory nuclei as well as at meetings of the active Party members in the factory with a view to improving them to the utmost and making them the best means in the hands of factory nuclei for increasing the Party's influence in the factories with the help of self-criticism. Active sympathizers should be rallied to the factory papers, including revolutionary social-democrats and members of reformist unions. Worker correspondents of Party publications and the press of the revolutionary trade union movement should be drawn in, and efforts should be made to turn the factory paper into the main support of the Party press and the revolutionary trade union press.

The red factory councils and revolutionary delegates are a most important auxiliary organization in the matter of mass work of the factory nuclei. The question of capturing the factory committees and consolidating our influence on the basis of such committees should be considered of utmost importance by the nuclei. The success of the factory nuclei largely depends upon the success of the struggle to capture the factory committees and to set up revolutionary delegate bodies as the main support of the nuclei in getting control of the factory committees or in organizing such wherever none exist (France).

WORK AMONG MEMBERS OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AND REFORMIST UNIONS AND AMONG NATIONAL FASCISTS

Factory nuclei should devote particular attention to social democratic workers and members of the reformist unions. Such work is now becoming of extreme importance in view of the fact that social-fascist treachery of the leaders of the Socialist and the Amsterdam Internationals becomes clearer and clearer before the broad sections of workers, as a result of which many of them desert these organizations and their reactionary leaders. In order to organize this work properly the factory nucleus must be well informed on the activities of the social-democratic party and the reformist union

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in the given factory. For this purpose it must find out who belongs to the social-democratic party and to the reformist union and must surround them with Party members and sympathizers working near them. The factory nucleus should at the same time keep itself informed through the fraction of the reformist union as to what that union intends to do in the factory, through whom, and how.

One of the major tasks of fighting against social-democratic and reformist influence in the factory should be to expose those who directly bring that influence into the factory. All the social democratic and reformist officials in the factory should be severely criticized in the propaganda and agitation in the factory nucleus with the help of Communist fractions and especially the factory paper, each number of which should cite facts exposing the treacherous anti-working class part played by these agents of the bourgeoisie in the factory. The nucleus should at the same time closely follow the rising discontent of members of the social-democratic party and the reformist unions with the policy of their leaders, establishing closer contact with the discontented elements and on the basis of the united front tactics from below make them cooperate in actions in favor of immediate demands of the workers of the given factory and the working class as a whole.

The Party nucleus must be very flexible when approaching social-democratic and reformist workers. Naturally, such workers will not immediately agree with the program and tactics of our Party. These workers begin to break away from their leaders in connection with some particular question while they still share their views on other matters, still keeping contact with them and carrying out their instructions. The main task of the factory nucleus in dealing with such workers is not to criticize them for not leaving their leaders altogether, but to find a common language with them on questions concerning which they are ready to part company with their leaders, so that they may be drawn into the struggle for immediate demands and that in the course of that struggle the cleavage between them and their reactionary leaders may be deepened to the point of their deserting their leaders altogether.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST DEVIATIONS

The Party cannot be reorganized on a factory basis unless a most determined and relentless struggle is waged against any kind of deviation from the general line of the Communist International. Practice has shown in all the Communist Parties that both the Right and "Left" opportunists are opposed to the factory nuclei. But the

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Right wing opportunist deviation is undoubtedly the greater obstacle to the reorganization of the Parties on the basis of factory nuclei and to their general Bolshevization. The Right wingers, with their passivity, their traditions, their old social-democratic methods, are unquestionably the greatest hindrance in the development and strengthening of the factory nucleus. International experience in the organization of the Communist Parties has also shown that very often opportunists in practice in the matter of organization of factory nuclei are people who on general political questions vote in favor of the general line of the International. A persistent and consistent struggle against this type of opportunists is necessary in all links of the Party organization, for this form of opportunism in practice is most dangerous for the actual Bolshevist reorganization of the Communist ranks. The most ruthless criticism in this respect is necessary of the activities of Party committees in charge of the factory nuclei.

The criterion in judging the success and correctness of the work of those Party committees at the present time should be their ability to lead the factory nuclei, their ability to strengthen and activize them. The work of all the lower Party organizations, including the factory nuclei, should be examined from this viewpoint. First of all, an investigation should be made of how the Party members are divided in the factory and street nuclei; all workers belonging to street nuclei should be made to explain why they do not perform Party work in their factories and why they do not join their factory nuclei. As to the factory nuclei, they should be investigated with a view to finding out whether they are really organs of Party contact with the workers of the given factory, to what extent they serve the interests of the current struggle of the workers in the factory, whether they link up the current struggles with the general political struggle of the working class, with the general program of action, framed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Communist International for the Party as a whole. The best Party forces should be mobilized for the investigation. It should be conducted on the basis of mass self-criticism from below, inviting all Party members to cooperate, organizing nucleus and district meetings, Party conferences, conferences of the active members in the lower organizations, etc.

The conclusion should by no means be drawn that every worker belonging to the Party and evading Communist activity in his nucleus or in the factory must be an opportunist. There is no doubt that there are opportunists among Communist workers in the factory and that there are also such people among them who have no business

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to belong to the Party. However, it is quite certain that the great majority of working class members of the Party not working in factory nuclei and even evading such work, are not opportunists, and that the chief reason for their failure to work in the factory nuclei does not lie in their opportunism but in the inability of the local Party leadership to organize properly the work of the factory nuclei, to carry on explanatory work with regard to the reorganization of Party work on a factory basis, and to combine legal and illegal forms of work in the factory nuclei. In this respect it is absolutely necessary that all Parties devote most serious attention when investigating the work of the factory nuclei, not to the formal side of the work of factory nuclei with regard to regular meetings, etc., but to the practical problems of aiding them, of doing everything to convert them into genuine links between the Party and the masses of factory workers of the given enterprise. The Party committee must see to it that the factory nuclei should organize the defence of the daily interests of the workers of the given factory with the support of the many legal and semi-legal factory organizations, the factory trade union groups first and foremost, and that they should constantly explain the aims and tasks of the Communist Party and expose the treachery of the social-fascist leaders and the counter-revolutionary activity of the national socialists (fascists).

As an organizational consolidation of the Communist Parties, and of the factory nuclei especially, is of paramount importance, if the directions of the February Presidium of the E. C. C. I. are to be carried out, all the Communist Parties must seriously consider all questions connected with the reorganization of Party work on a factory nucleus basis. In accordance with concrete local conditions, they must work out the necessary practical measures, fix responsibility and establish systematic control over the carrying through of these measures. It is essential for the Party committees to make it a rule to receive reports from the Org. Departments about the development of Party work in the factories. On the basis of these reports, the Party committees must take the necessary measures for the further strengthening of this work, for the conversion of the factory nuclei, with the least possible delay, into genuine basic organizations of the Party.

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From Opportunism to Counter-Revolution

This is the third and concluding article of the series begun in the August issue of THE COMMUNIST

By V. J. JEROME

WE should be guilty of a fundamental error if we went no further than to offer citations in disproof of Kautsky's contention that the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat receives but an isolated, passing reference in the writings of Marx. To rest at that, would tend to give Marxism the semblance of being on the defensive —a position completely out of consonance with the revolutionary nature of the theory of the proletariat. The numerous passages in the various works of Marx and Engels stressing the principle of proletarian rule and giving to that principle the formulation "dictatorship of the proletariat" are in themselves sufficient to brand the Kautskys as willful perverters and vitiators of Marxism. But the teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat does not stand in need of attesting passages. It is not in scattered sections that the teaching is to be found, but in the heart, in the center, in the essence of Marxism. For Marxism is the theory and practice of the establishment of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat as the indispensable and inevitable transition State leading from the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism to the classless society.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a necessary resultant of the destruction of capitalism, as it is the precondition for the establishment of Socialism. The revisionists, setting themselves against the dictatorship of the proletariat, by that fact reject both the Marxian teaching on revolution and the objective, Communism. Hence Bernstein, who rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat, declared that the goal (socialism) was to him nothing, that the method to be pursued (whither, since there is no goal?) was one of peacefulness and reform. Hence, Kautsky, who rejects the dictatorship of the proletariat in favor of a bourgeois coalition government, can speak of the "corrupting influence" which every revolution must exert on those who participate in it, while Socialism, the classless society, becomes with him a system in which "all classes and interests are represented in the governing body according to their strength".

The principles of the class struggle and revolution, of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the classless society are integrated in

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Marxism. Their integration is Marxism. Their inseparability is inherent in the system of dialectic materialism.

Thus, as far back as 1844, the year in which Marx first formulated his materialist conception of history, we find embodied in *The Holy Family* the philosophic basis upon which the positions of Marxism are established. In that work, which he wrote in collaboration with Engels, the twenty-six-year-old Marx, with the profundity of genius, penetrated by means of the dialectic method into the involvements and contradictions of the capitalist system. He revealed to the proletariat the understanding of its status in the modern class society; of its differentiation in form of enslavement and in mode of struggle from all earlier working classes. He presented the theory for the perception of its perspectives, tasks, and methods in its historic passage through decisive conflict from enchainment to self-liberation. He showed how through its own liberation the victorious proletariat would achieve the liberation of all society.

Marx demonstrated in his dialectic analysis of capitalist society that the proletariat stands in relation to private property as its conditioned opposite. In this relationship capital, the positive side, aims to maintain and perpetuate itself, and in so doing strives to maintain the co-existence of the wage-slave class, the antithesis which conditions its own being. But, by the laws of dialectics, the negative side, the proletariat, struggles to negate itself as the enslaved opposite of capital, to liberate itself from the antithesis, in the course of which it must abolish its opposite, capitalist private property. The wage-slave class is therefore for Marx the rebellious element in the antithesis, "its unrest within it," the dynamic division of society which "executes the judgment that private property by engendering the proletariat suspends over itself."*

We have in this early work the dialectic materialist basis of the Marxian theory of capitalist production relations, of the Marxian teaching on the State, on revolution, on the historic role of the proletariat.

We see from this that Marxism achieved its essence in the postulation of the self-liberating role of the proletariat, in the principle of organic class struggle leading to the revolutionary destruction

* Compare with the repeated emphases on the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism throughout the writings of Marx and Engels, as: a) "Before all, therefore, the bourgeoisie produces its own gravediggers. Its downfall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable." (*Communist Manifesto.*) b) "It is to force that in due time the workers will have to appeal if the dominion of labor is to be established." (From Marx' speech at the Hague Congress of the First International, 1872.)

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of capitalism by the victorious proletariat and culminating in the inevitable revolutionary transformation of private property into Communism.

When we examine the antithesis that Marx speak of, we ask: What is the instrument wherewith the thesis, capital, strives to reproduce itself through maintaining and perpetuating its negation, the proletariat, in the contradictory capitalist production relations? That instrument can be no other than one that affirms the supremacy of the thesis, the bourgeoisie, through forcibly subjecting the proletariat to the status of conditioned negation within the existent antithesis, the capitalist production relations. Marxism conceives that instrument as the State, the inevitable product of every class society, rising as the organized political power of the class that is in economic mastery. Purposing to maintain the property relations in status quo, the State takes on the semblance of a political entity, a superstructure, rising over society and surrounding itself with the ideological aura of harmonizer of the classes. But the antagonism of the classes is inherent in the contradiction which is the condition of their coexistence. Hence the "order" which the State exerts over society is only apparent; in essence it is an integument aimed to constrict the class conflict. The struggle of the proletariat is therefore directed against the capitalist State, and the class conflict reveals itself as a political struggle. This struggle is in a constant process of development as the productive forces engendered by the capitalist mode of production develop to a point where the existing property relations can no longer play a developmental role, where, in fact, they have become a drag upon the process of production. "Then," says Marx, "comes the period of social revolution". It is the point at which the negation negates itself, at which it destroys the instrument that keeps it in subjection—the State. "This integument is burst asunder. The knell of private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."

But the expropriation of the bourgeoisie does not achieve immediately the classless society. Though expropriated, the bourgeoisie has not ceased outright its existence as a class, as a social force struggling to restore the old order. The proletariat must resist with forcible suppression the counter-revolutionary efforts of the bourgeoisie, which, though overthrown, is not yet destroyed. It must consolidate itself with the peasantry, leading it in common struggle for the establishment of Socialism. It must remove the contradiction between city and country, between mental and manual labor. It must transform the mental outlook of the people to facilitate the establishment of the classless society.

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The capitalist class prepares the material basis for the transformation of the capitalist order into Socialism, but the establishment of Socialism, the first phase of the classless society, is the historic task of the proletariat. The working class is not a mere mechanical transmitter of the socialized method of production from capitalism to Socialism; it takes over through forcible seizure the material forces of production, the highly developed technique of capitalist industry and commerce, and consummates it under qualitatively transformed conditions of class struggle; it develops the human and material productive forces to that level which transcends the capacities of capitalism but below which Socialism cannot be established.

This period, the transition stage between the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the classless society, must of necessity be the period of proletarian domination, of the revolutionary transition State, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is this central meaning, and not the accidentalism that the Kautskys read into it, which penetrates the recurrent emphasis throughout the writings of Marx and Engels on the violent overthrow of capitalism, on the seizure of power by the proletariat, on the transitional proletarian State leading to the classless society.

Clearly, inherent in the Marxian teaching on revolution is the subjective revolutionary role of the proletariat. It is in fact this principle which constituted Marx' dialectic transformation of Feuerbach's mechanistic materialism, so succinctly formulated in the Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach: "Philosophers have merely interpreted the world variously; the moment has come to change it." The dynamic role of the subject in reaction upon the material conditions at hand is a necessary factor in the dialectics of society. We do not meet the question Marxistically when we state merely that the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism is rendered necessary by the reluctance of the private-property holders to relinquish their monopoly. Left as the sole explanation, such a theory of revolution would tend to take on the aspect of apology. It is necessary to assert the historic revolutionary role of the proletariat, to affirm that the revolutionary overthrow is the necessary culminating moment in the class offensive waged by the proletariat which cannot proceed to power except through a violent, cataclysmic revolutionary act. Moreover, as Marx and Engels pointed out, the proletariat needs to make the revolution so that in the practice of transforming the material conditions of society it may transform its own consciousness into a Communist

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world-outlook, that it may "shake off all the filth, in order to capacitate itself for the founding of a new society". This is the answer of Marxism to Kautsky's puritanical abhorrence for the "unethical" nature of revolution, for the "corrupting influence" that the revolution, according to the high priest of Menshevism, is bound to exert on those who make it.

The revisionist theory of accretion through reforms, of a peaceful succession to Socialism, of the substitution of an inter-class coalition government for the dictatorship of the proletariat, is manifestly in diametric opposition to everything that Marxism stands for. The notion of an arithmetic progression of democratic reforms until the cipher *Socialism* is attained, constitutes an outright denial of dialectics in the social process. It represents the rejection of the dialectics of democracy, and its replacement by the metaphysical concept of democracy as an abstract, immutable, class-transcending form of society, as a form of society which is ideal both for bourgeoisie and proletariat, and which can therefore best be achieved through the harmonious collaboration of the classes.

This is the "Marxism" of the social democracy. And against this degradation of the revolutionary theory of the proletariat, Leninism comes forward in struggle.

Having restored the Marxian theory of the State from the distorted form it had been given by the opportunists of the Second International, Lenin further developed the theory with the masterly use of Marxian dialectics into a guide and a weapon for the proletariat in the era of proletarian revolutions. Lenin began with the declaration that "only he is a Marxist who extends his acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the dictatorship of the proletariat".

The classless society, Lenin demonstrates with Marx and Engels, is impossible of attainment, save through the political period of transition, which must of necessity be the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin conceives the dictatorship of the proletariat as an inevitable phase in the dialectics of the State. In his notebook *Marxism on the State* (January-February, 1917), he analyzes the development of the State as follows:

> "I—in capitalist society, a State in the proper sense of the word.
> "II—the transition (dictatorship of the proletariat) a State of the transitional type (not a State in the proper sense of the word).
> "III—Communist society: the *withering away* of the State."

From the State, to the transition State, to Statelessness.

In treating of the second phase, the dictatorship of the proletariat,

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Lenin has in mind the letter Engels wrote to Bebel (in 1875) in which he referred to the Paris Commune as a State "which was no longer a State in the proper sense of the word". And Lenin interprets Engels' characterization of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as "the transitional form from the State to no State," *i.e.*, from capitalism to Communism.

Collaterally, Lenin presents the dialectic analysis of the evolution of democracy from the capitalist epoch, through the transitional proletarian State, to the classless society. The analysis is thus diagrammed:

> "I—Democracy only by way of exception and never complete . . .
> "II—Democracy almost complete, limited only by the *crushing* of the resistance of the bourgeoisie.
> "III—Democracy really complete, becoming a habit and *for that reason* dying out . . . Complete democracy equals no democracy. This is not a paradox, but a truth!"

In these brief analyses, which proceed from the theory of the State developed by Marx and Engels, Lenin demonstrated decisively the anti-proletarian content of the Kautskian conception of the State and democracy. Against the Kautskian council to the working class that it has a portion in capitalist democracy, that it has something to lose with the loss of its chains, that the world to be won is in the bourgeois State, which it must therefore guard and strengthen and bolster up with its proletarian power—against this Menshevist council, Lenin, the Bolshevik, declares: Democracy for the few, democracy for the master class—that is your vaunted capitalist democracy. Your freedom is a phantom, except for the exploiters. Democracy and freedom begin for the vast toiling masses only through their destruction of the entire political structure of capitalism. Only through *the crushing of the resistance of the bourgeoisie* by the proletariat in power can democracy rise and grow complete. But its very completion spells its termination. For the classlessness of Communism will have developed between individual and society a coordination of interests manifested in a social consciousness that will not longer need an instrument of coercion. The State will have withered away.

Kautsky calls Leninism an aberration from Marxism—the Marxism which declares that "the first step in the workers' revolution is *to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to establish democracy*"!* (Italics mine—V. J. J.) Kautsky sheds tears over what poor Engels, were he now living, would say at the spectacle

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* *Communist Manifesto.*

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of the "undemocratic" dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union.* Dry your tears, compassionate Kautsky; Engels' answer is most reassuring. For in that letter to Bebel, referred to above, Engels speaks: "As long as the proletariat *needs* the State, it needs it, not in the interests of freedom, but for the purpose of crushing its antagonists; and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom, then the State, as such, ceases to exist."

To make reassurance double, let us place side by side with Engels' statement, Stalin's conception of the proletarian transition State which is the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union:

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat is not a change of ministry, but a new State, with new central and local administrative organs; it is a proletarian State which rises like a phœnix out of the ashes of the old bourgeois State."

Really, Herr Kautsky, a past master like you should by now have become more deft in the Menshevik art of falsification.

But isn't it time to ask: What is this great concern for democracy which Kautsky and his colleagues of the Second International display to the world in behalf of the Soviet Union? Is it the milk of human kindness welling in them for all things human? Is it their love for the broad humanity? What shall we say, then, of the long career of crime, bloody and brutal, which is the biography of the social democracy since the beginning of the World War? What shall we say of the *Hyndmans* who, even before the World War, came forward to defend the action of Kitchener at Khartoum—the imperialist Kitchener who shot natives from the mouths of cannon, who chained colonial slaves and blew them into the air? What shall we say of the Vanderveldes who lent support to the Belgian imperialist ravagers of the Congo by refusing to join in the international campaign of protest? What shall we say of the great betrayal of 1914, when the leaders of the social democracy voted to hurl working masses against working masses in the great world conflict of robber imperialists, when the Longuets and the Renaudels and the Vanderveldes and the Hendersons entered the war ministries, each to conduct the war maneuvers of his capitalist class? What shall we say of the Scheidemanns, the Eberts, the Noskes, who shot down the Spartacists like dogs; who murdered the revolutionary leaders, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Jogiches, and unnumbered others; who helped General Eppe and Captain Erhardt organize their White Guard brigades—the nucleus of the fascist

* See Article I of this series, *The Communist*, August, 1933.

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Storm Troops? What shall we say of the Zoergiebels, the socialist police heads, who mowed down May-Day paraders in Neukoelln and Wedding? What shall we say of the MacDonalds and the Snowdens who rushed troops against the masses of India, who sent against the colonial slaves of Egypt, of Arabia, of China, gunboats and air-bombings and flogging-whips? What shall we say of the interventionists, the socialist plotters with White Guards and imperialists against the Union of Soviet Republics, the Kautskys and Hilferdings who financed counter-revolutionary Mensheviks in the Soviet Union, the Hillquits who entered suit against the Soviet Union for the restoration of the Baku oil-fields to the former Czarist magnates?

Or is it perhaps their love of freedom which sets them to bewail the dictatorship of the proletariat? One must admit that it is. With zeal and with passion they pant for the freedom of the old order to rearise. With irrepressible eagerness they long to make of the Soviet Union what they have made of England, of Spain, of Poland, and of Germany.

They long to bring about democracy!

If they had in them but a grain of sincerity for the cause of the working class, these claimants to the name "Marxians" could not refrain from admitting openly that in the Socialist economic system of the Soviet Union there has arisen for the first time in history that State whose power is the rule of all the toilers, the workers and peasants, who constitute almost the entire population. They would recognize that the Soviet system, based on the mass organizations of the proletariat, bringing the masses into close identity with the government, combining the legislative and executive powers, affords the true, the proletarian, democracy. They would recognize that the proletarian State holds in subjection a class, not of exploited, but of erstwhile exploiters struggling to reassert themselves, not a revolutionary but a counter-revolutionary class. They would recognize that what is suppressed in the Soviet Union is, not democracy, but the suppression of democracy. They would recognize that while throughout the capitalist world there is a crisis unparallelled in history, with armies of millions of unemployed who can never be reabsorbed into industry, with wage-reductions, with hunger, with brutal capitalist terror, with decline, disintegration, chaos, there is gigantic progress where the proletariat rules. They would recognize, if their career of treachery did not drive them to the avoidance of all truth, that in the Soviet Union industry is planned, that crises are there impossible. They would recognize that new industrial cities and world-astounding industrial giants are springing up over

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the land, that new mines are opened, that industry is flourishing, that unemployment is unknown. They would recognize that on the fields where but yesterday illiterate, degraded moujiks struggled with ox-drawn ploughs against a stubborn soil, there rise today great farm collectives equipped with thousands of tractors, operating on the basis of the highest achievements of science—with the peasant, colleague of the city worker, master with him of the entire land. They would recognize in the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union the realization of the Marxian teaching that in the proletarian revolution the last dictatorship of a social minority is overthrown and the last of the exploited classes liberates itself for the task of liberating all humanity. They would recognize that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the sole dictatorship that does not strive to perpetuate itself, that the proletarian State is transforming itself into the Stateless society, that the Five-Year Plan for Socialist Construction is the plan for the withering away of the State, for the flowering of Communist humanity.

But the opportunism of the social democracy has long degenerated into treachery. There comes a moment in the course of a given practice when, carried further, it undergoes a qualitative transformation. That moment in the practice of the Second International was August 1914. Decades of unchecked opportunism had transformed the social-democracy into social-chauvinism. Today the international social-democracy is the main social support of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the proletariat; without that mainstay the bourgeoisie in the advanced capitalist countries could not maintain itself in power. Today the social-democracy is everywhere engaged in the role of holding back the initiative of the masses to struggle against fascism. It is the paver of the road to fascism where fascization is in process; it is the advocate of peace with fascism where fascism has gained power. This is the meaning of Comrade Stalin's words:

> "Fascism is a militant organization of the bourgeoisie resting on the active support of social-democracy. Social-democracy is objectively the moderate wing of fascism."

In the era of decaying capitalism and of proletarian revolutions, the bourgeoisie depends upon the social-democracy to check with "left" maneuvers the revolutionary will of the masses. It relies upon the petty-bourgeois social democracy to limit the vision of the proletariat within the confines of capitalism. And that the confidence of the capitalist class is not misplaced can be seen from the strenuous efforts which the leaders of the Socialist parties have everywhere put forth to sway the broad toiling masses into giving

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up the struggle against the exploiting class. To this end they have endeavored to conceal the political content of the proletarian class struggle; to this end they have woven the illusion of class commonalty in the bourgeois State; to this end they broke the British General Strike of 1926; to this end they have supported the bourgeois League of Nations; to this end they brought to office Hindenburg, the annointer of Hitler; to this end they have hailed as nothing short of revolution Roosevelt's fascizing N.R.A., to this end—but to what purpose, when the name of their crimes is legion?

Let the following passage serve as a concise characterization of the role of the social-democracy:

> "From year to year the Socialist parties in all countries grew steadily in magnitude, in organization, in ideological power. The party of the working class, the social-democratic party, became just as large and important as the other parties, even greater and more important. *This is evidenced by the great careers which the deserters from the Socialist Party later made for themselves in the capitalist parties. Thanks to the schooling and education that they received in our party, they became the most eminent political leaders in the bourgeois camp—such as Millerand and Briand in France, Mussolini in Italy, and MacDonald in England.*" (Emphasis mine—V. J. J.)

These lines were not written as Communist satire against Kautsky and his opportunist confreres who have converted the social democracy into a school for treachery; they were written in all seriousness as a tribute to social democracy; they were written by none other than Herr Kautsky.*

The whole perfidious performance, the degradation, the unbelievable shamelessness of social-democracy, are expressed in this unconscious confession. Kautsky sets out to demonstrate the greatness of the Second International; and what is the criterion he produces? Its record as a training ground for traitors! "*Thanks to the schooling and education that they have received in our party . . .*" Thanks, indeed, to the schooling they have received in the art of opportunism; in renouncing the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for class peace, for vacillation, for servility to capitalism; in replacing the class essence of the State with the concept of the democratic people's State; in replacing the necessity for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order with a program of peaceful growth into Socialism; in rejecting the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the principle of a bourgeois coalition government!

Thanks to the schooling—at your hands, Herr Kautsky!—from

* *Forward*, March 26, 1933.

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the days when you first embarked upon your Centrist course in the double-flagged ship, *For Marxism and Fatherland*, from the days when you entered the struggle of Marx against Lassalle with the treacherous plea, "... but we do not forget that Lassalle, too, was one of our teachers and foremost fighters"—to this hour, when you defend the traitorous cowardice of the German social-democratic leadership in the face of Hitlerism with the unctuous apology:

> "The policy of withdrawing and postponing the battle is in no way a policy of capitulation. It is not a resignation from struggle, but a transition to other methods of struggle."*

—thanks to the schooling at your hands in the theory and practice of surrender to the pressure of the bourgeoisie, the international social-democracy is today on the line of the counter-revolutionary offensive against the working class.

The advance of the proletariat in the performance of its historic role is conditioned upon the destruction of the influence of the social-fascist leadership upon considerable sections of the toiling masses. The struggle for winning over the majority of the working class for the proletarian revolution is simultaneously the struggle for winning away the rank-and-file workers from the counter-revolution in masks of Socialism. This is the task of the World Communist Party, the Communist International—the Party of Lenin which leads the daily struggles of the working class under the banner of the proletarian revolution, under the banner of the dictatorship of the proletariat—under the banner of living, creative Marxism.

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* *Kampf*, June, 1933, p. 244.

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Beginnings of Revolutionary Political Action in the U.S.A.

By VERN SMITH

WORKING class political theory in the United States was backward throughout the last century for the same reason that labor organization here lagged behind that of Europe. The will-o'-the-wisp of the frontier, cheap land, danced ever westward, drawing after it the rebels. Labor fought a continuous rear guard action in the settled communities, always with an eye toward the easy path of retreat to more primitive communities. Even when the leaders did not actually run away to become farmers, the influence of the frontier farming communities was upon them, and on all politics, producing a queer tangled morass of theories.

Utopian socialism, imported from Europe but thoroughly naturalized, had a tremendous vogue in the first half of the century. Later, Greenbackism (cheap paper money theories) and Populism (anti-monopoly theories) drew far more votes than any proletarian class struggle doctrine.

The native working class political movement which grew out of the unions, in a healthy enough way, was continually being enticed towards some currency-tinkering or colonization panacea. The movement lived in the midst of a whole nation of farmers. It was always affected by the crude frontier Jacksonian democracy.

Even after the Civil War, when northern capitalism took sharp control of national affairs, and the frontier began to dwindle, this habit of thought persisted.

UTOPIANISM

The Utopian socialist movement (colonization schemes) reached its height before the Civil War—the labor movement didn't shake it off entirely until after Job Harriman's New Llano of a few years ago. In fact, we still have Brookwood and Commonwealth College as a kind of vermiform appendix of the Utopian period.

The cheap money trend in labor politics rose to a climax in 1888, when it won, under the National Greenback Labor Party,

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a whole list of city, state and even national offices, and swept all through the 1870's and '80's a host of local labor parties into its stream, only finally to lead most of them on into the Republican or Democratic parties.

POPULISM

The Populist ("Bust the Trusts") anti-monopoly movement did the same to the continual mushroom growths of local labor parties for a few years after the collapse of the greenback movement, only to run into Bryan Democracy in the middle of the 1890's and merge with it. Populism was a reformist party, with many of the demands of the labor unions: shorter hours, factory inspection, better schools, etc.

SINGLE TAX

The period of 1886-1888 saw the rise of the fetish of single tax. It began as a labor reform party. "Progressive Democracy" it was called at the height of its influence. Its candidate and chief theoretician, Henry George, just barely missed being elected mayor of New York in 1886. George got 68,000 votes, Hewett (Tammany) got 90,000 and Theodore Roosevelt (Republican) got 60,000. During the first year even the Socialist leaders held out illusions about the "partial socialism" of the Henry George campaign. Coupled with the single tax demand were demands for no police interference with workers' meetings, right of workers to serve on grand juries, factory inspection and sanitary laws, abolition of contract labor, equal pay for women, government ownership of railways and telegraphs, etc., usual demands of labor at that period.

But George himself rebuffed the labor support, declaring he did not want to lead a "class movement," and the Socialists finally reorientated themselves and began to attack the single tax philosophy as false. The single-tax movement quickly became a doctrinnaire sect which it still remains today.

Now these foregoing movements were all native American, the natural expressions of a class of workers who had been or expected to be farmers or small employers, or they were the combined movements of workers and poor farmers with the farmers rather in the lead, and they were movements in a period of the shifting frontier and the beginnings of big capitalism. Undoubtedly, a true revolutionary working class political party could have eventually arisen from among them. There was always a minority of scat-

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tered individuals entangled in these confusing native and naive political organizations, who looked to the left.

But the revolutionary thory of Europe was throughout so far in advance, the working classes of Europe, in the absence of the frontier, so much more crystallized and class conscious, that Socialist theory developed first in Europe and was imported into the United States.

MARXISM IN AMERICA

The Marxians came over about the time of the Civil War and made the beginnings of revolutionary politics in America, and for years the history of these movements is one of small groups with a Marxian political theory, far in advance of the confused ideas of the American masses, and with no one during that time knowing how to build bridges from the masses to the vanguard. This bridge-building is even yet, after Marx and after Lenin, still not sufficiently well understood by the revolutionists here.

GERMAN MEMBERSHIP

Let us take a look at this history. Sections (branches) of the International Workingmen's Association were formed in the larger cities of the United States immediately after its organization in London in 1864. For years its membership in America was composed almost entirely of German immigrants, and later, radical French workers driven over here by the persecutions following the smashing of the Commune of Paris. Clear up to 1876 it was torn by factional struggles, not so much between Marxists and Bakuninists as in Europe, as between Marxians, demanding labor union organization and political action, and the Lassalleans, who sneered at unions and demanded entire concentration on parliamentarism for the purpose of winning state support for cooperative ventures. Of course the Lassalleans could draw on the generally common Utopian and colonization ideas of the American workers.

In 1871 the I.W.M.A. had eight sections and only 293 members in the U.S.A.

THE FIRST SPLIT

Section 12, the only one largely American in membership, was a collection of freaks, who went off on a crusade for "free sex relations" and finally had to be expelled after much quarreling with Sorge and after appeals to the General Council, the center in Europe. Section 12 won over 12 other small sections (the I.W.

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M.A. was growing) and launched the "American Confederation of the International" in Philadelphia in 1872.

The General Council, which meant the international headquarters of the I.W.M.A., was moved to New York in 1872, and Sorge became the recognized leader here.

In 1873 a new struggle broke out, which seems at first sight to have been mere unprincipled factionalism, at least the political trends are hard to see, between the four other sections in New York and Section 1 of New York, the largest and oldest. The four rebellious sections gathered a couple more around them, but just before and at the I.W.M.A. convention of 1874, their opposition was badly defeated and several sections expelled. The membership then was about 1,000.

GOMPERSISM MAKES ITS MARK

The leader of this rebellion against Section 1 and the I.W.M.A. headquarters was one Adolph Strasser, best known in the American labor movement as the co-worker of Samuel Gompers when both were officials in the Cigar Makers International Union, just a few years after the split in the International Workingmen's Association. Strasser worked out with Gompers the essentials of the philosophy known as "Gompersism"—high union dues, centralization of finances and power, struggle only for severely limited demands and no struggle at all if possible, conformity with the capitalist system, craft unionism as against industrial, and skillful and unprincipled demagogy.

That gives one clue to the nature of the factionalism in the I.W.M.A. The fact that the splitters were in those sections with the greatest number of English speaking members gives another. It was primarily a split between the revolutionary vanguard and a group drifting toward the non-revolutionary masses.

RELIEF AND NO EVICTIONS

The most important action by the International in this period was the leading of demonstrations of tens of thousands of unemployed in New York and Chicago, 1873. The demonstrations were mobilized around the following slogans, worked out by the I.W.M.A. federal council in New York, as advice to the unemployed central committee. They were:

Employment on public works at customary wages.

One week's relief, either in food or money, for needy cases.

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No eviction of the unemployed for non-payment of rent.

The New York police set a precedent that lasted right down to and including this present crisis. The police made a merciless assault with clubs and guns on the demonstrators in Tompkins Square. Hundreds were injured.

In 1874, Section 1 seized the official organ of the International as a result of attempts by Sorge to put a little more revolutionary vigor into it and in the course of the resistance to Sorge by both the editors and Section 1. The General Council of the I.W.M.A. suspended Section 1, which then sued in the capitalist courts and got control of the paper. But the paper died two months later, and two years later the International was dead, too, shattered by these (and other lesser) factional splits. The I.W.M.A. was formally dissolved at its last convention in Philadelphia. The seed it sowed, however, did not die out. Those who got their training in the First International developed in after years a Marxian core in the labor movement, and eventually it became a revolutionary left wing.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The group led by Strasser continued its existence, held a convention in May, 1874, and with a number of smaller labor groups, mostly Lassallean, formed the Social Democratic Party of North America. It is one more confusing thing that Strasser, the trade unionist, could take in these Lassallean factions. But Lassalle's theories were about played out.

After the Chicago unemployed demonstration of 1873, the Labor Party of Illinois was formed—Lassallean, but including a small Marxian group established by Weydemeyer before the Civil War and captured later by the Lassalleans. By 1874 the combined groups had swung back toward at least the Marxian tenet which calls for organization of labor unions.

Other local labor parties grew up. There was a general propaganda for unions, for the eight-hour day, for more public schools, against use of militia in strikes.

CONVENTIONS OF 1876

It was in 1875 to 1877 that the Greenback agitation was strong. One of the Greenback groups, a secret society calling itself "Junior Sons of '76" was organized in Pittsburgh, May 4, 1874. It was composed largely of workers, its program was cheap paper money, referendum and recall, no militia in strike struggles. It was for

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independent political action. It invited all labor and reformist organizations in the country to meet in national convention in Tyrone, Pa., Dec. 28, 1875. Among others, the Social Democratic Party of North America accepted this invitation. The convention did little aside from calling another to meet in Pittsburgh, April 17, 1876. The Pittsburgh Convention was controlled by the Knights of Labor and the Greenback delegates, but there were represented the International Workingmen's Association (whose membership was now down to 635), the Labor Party of Illinois (593 members), the Social Democratic Party of North America (1,500 members) and the Social-Political Workingmen's Society of Cincinnati (250 members).

Otto Weydemeyer presented the program of 21 Socialist delegates: abolition of wage slavery as the goal, international affiliation to check the importation of European strike breakers, organization of unions as the first task, independent political action but not until the movement was strong enough. This last was generally interpreted as meaning, not until a number of unions endorsed it.

The Greenback majority brushed aside the Socialist program and made paper money and high tariff the main demands. The Socialists bolted the convention. The convention then lost its nerve, adopted meaningless resolutions and adjourned.

But before the delegates from the four Socialist parties left Pittsburgh they held a joint caucus, adopted "articles of fusion" and appointed a temporary joint central committee, then called their own national convention to meet July 19, 1876, in Philadelphia.

PARENT OF THE S. L. P.

The July conference was attended by Sorge and Weydemeyer of the I.W.M.A., Strasser from the Social Democrats, and delegates from the other two parties. All these parties merged then and there, under the name of the Workingmen's Party of the United States, with a platform calling for abolition of capitalism, for immediate demands, for formation of unions and for participation as an independent political party in elections "wherever the situation is favorable."

The I.W.M.A. now vanishes, and from this "Workingmen's Party" the Socialist and Communist parties of today descended in a direct line.

The Workingmen's Party established national headquarters at Chicago, but changed it almost every year thereafter. The party

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had three papers to begin with, of which the main one, in English, was *The Socialist* (its name temporarily was changed to *Labor Standard*).

The Workingmen's Party plunged into the elections. Its candidate, Albert R. Parsons, got a sixth of the votes for alderman in the 15th ward in Chicago in 1877. It elected some city officials in Milwaukee (German population) that same year. It fell down miserably in its duty to the heroic 1877 railroad strikers.

S. L. P. APPEARS

The party's 1877 convention in Newark changed the name to Socialist Labor Party, and moved the headquarters to Cincinnati, where the official organ in English, *The National Socialist*, was also established.

At the Newark convention there were reported 72 sections, with 7,000 members, and 21 papers, of which two German language papers were dailies. Rapid growth followed, and considerable gains in vote, especially where there were close connections with the unions, as in Chicago. The Socialist vote in Chicago was 11,800 in 1879, with four Socialist aldermen elected.

The program of the party as shown in its platform during these years declares:

"Labor being the source of all wealth and civilization and useful labor being possible only by and through the associated efforts of the people, the means of labor should therefore in justice belong to society," which may be taken as a somewhat free interpretation of Marxism, but still a revolutionary doctrine. It goes on, without using the word "capitalist" to describe capitalist exploitation; it declares the "ruling political parties" to be instruments of the "dominant or wealthy classes," and calls on "the working people" to "organize themselves into one great Labor Party, using political power to achieve industrial independence." It urges "international affiliation" (does not say to what—there was no International at that time); it calls for labor unions, but prescribes no strategy or tactics or form of organization, nor does it mention those then existing either in praise or blame.

Then it says: "We demand that the resources of life, the means of production, public transportation and communication, land, machinery, railroads, telegraph lines, canals, etc., become as fast as practicable the common property of the whole people through the government." (It is clear they were not syndicalists, but probably

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some of them were state capitalists.) It proposes to "abolish the wages system and substitute intead co-operative production with a just distribution of its rewards."

FOR GRADUAL REVOLUTION?

Then follows this curious paragraph (emphasis as in the original):

"The Socialistic Labor Party presents the following demands as measures to ameliorate the condition of the working people under our present competitive system and to gradually *accomplish the entire removal* of the same."

This is the only official indication of the tactics they meant to use in abolishing capitalism, and the demands, which were all right in themselves, and were those of the organized trade union movement of the time, would hardly abolish capitalism, gradually or otherwise. They were: eight-hour day, sanitary and factory inspection, establishment of state and national bureaus of labor statistics, no convict labor contracted out to private persons or firms; 14-year age limit for child labor, compulsory education and free text books, accident compensation, wages paid in money and weekly (scrip was common then as now), right to organize and strike, "gratuitous administration of justice in all courts of law," abolition of indirect taxation and substitution of a graduated income tax, government banking and insurance, no limitation of suffrage; initiative, referendum, recall, and proportional representation.

WHITE CHAUVINISM

No mention whatever appears in this platform or in the party press of the Negroes, who were then just being finally re-conquered as slaves by the first K.K.K. counter revolution in the South. In fact the Negroes were absolutely forgotten by the Socialist movement from the end of the First International to the founding of the Third.

Perhaps worse than this omission, is a sin of commission. The Newark convention (1877) of the S. L. P. adopted a resolution denouncing Chinese labor at the moment the slaughter of Chinese was being prepared in California.

"THE SOCIALIST U. S. A."

Such a program as that of the S.L.P. is at best, because of its looseness of language, capable of being made in practice either much better or much worse. The official organs and speakers of

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the party made it worse. Take for example the very first issue of *The National Socialist*, carrying the Arm and Hammer emblem, published May 4, 1878. An article begins: "A political democracy, such as the United States, is just as much a variety of socialism as social democracy is; indeed, the latter means nothing more than a complete development of the former..."

The leaders were not labor racketeers. That was left for a later period in the history of the Socialist Party. The receipts of the S. L. P. national office from August 7 to Sept. 22, 1878 were $101. There were only two salaried officials, wages: $6 per week each. Most of the money was spent on printing of leaflets and pamphlets.

The S.L.P. was anti-prohibition. (Many of the native movements had been prohibition.) The S.L.P. was anti-imperialist, if the imperialism was far enough away. In this 1878 period, the S.L.P. followed carefully in its press the war of the Zulus in Africa against conquest by the British. But it didn't mention the Negroes in the United States.

PLEDGES NEVER TO REVOLT

It was vigorously parliamentarian, and terribly afraid of being "accused of the excesses of the Paris Commune."

The S.L.P. has not budged from this doctrine to this day. Since Bernstein, the present Socialist Party, child of the S. L. P., no longer believes in the inevitable downfall (or in the overthrow) of capitalism, but it is just as emphatic against force as a means of revolution. It has, however, used force to prevent revolution.

WORKERS WAKING UP

But now we reach the period of big labor struggles, 1877 to about 1893, and we can no longer speak just of a morass with the shadow of the frontier creeping over it. The morass is there: Populism, Bryanism, Progressive Parties, etc., are ahead. But from now on, there is also a militant section of American workers, forging ahead of the other workers, and at periods forging far ahead of the official revolutionary movement of their time. Such a period is this of the 1880's.

It started in Chicago. The Chicago workers had been suffering terrifically from police brutality, and the leadership still being German, a "Lehr und Wehr Verein" (Educational and Protective Association) had been organized in 1875, to defend workers going to the polls in elections. It extended its duties to strikes. It was

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after a while transformed into an armed defense corps, and it did good work. The Chicago sections of the S. L .P. supported it, so did the unions; the membership was drawn from both.

The S. L. P. national leadership cast a fishy eye upon it. They were, or pretended to be, afraid it was a bid for violent revolution.

The Lehr und Wehr Verein was only trying in the beginning to do just what the S.L.P. declared was justifiable. But the direct attack on it forced it further along. Still more resentment and still more extremism came in Chicago when the National Executive Committee of the S.L.P., on June 13, 1878, without permitting any defense, officially repudiated the Lehr und Wehr Verein and "all Socialist military societies." The S. L. P., had it said that this was not the time for a violent revolution, would have been correct. But when it repudiated all revolution as a matter of principle, and while officially pretending to approve the right of self defense, actually ruled out that right in the case at issue, the Chicago membership went wild. Parsons, a pronounced parliamentarian so far, began to really consider Anarchism. Other Chicago leaders did the same.

CHICAGO ANARCHISTS

The Chicago Anarchists became more and more extreme in the course of their reaction against the sickening legalism of the S. L. P., until they actually believed themselves that if the right word were given, a violent revolution was possible at that time. They were desperately sincere and marvelously heroic. Here is no space to go into the details of their leadership of struggles, of their agitation which resulted in the eight-hour general strike movement of 1886-1900 (though the A. F. of L. stole the credit), nor the horrible terror and frame-up and executions by which the Chicago Anarchists were crushed.

All we can say here is that the Chicago Anarchists were the finest product so far of the socialist movement since the days of Sorge, and that the official S. L. P. shows up very badly in comparison. It had much to do with driving the Chicago Anarchists into their forlorn hope, and it betrayed them in treacherous cowardly fashion when they were facing the gallows.

The S.L.P. survived the Anarchist split, and continued to grow slowly.

DANIEL DE LEON

After a brief revival of Lassalleanism in the S.L.P. in 1889, that faction was overthrown and disappears into history. At this

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time Daniel De Leon and his chief lieutenant, Lucien Sanial, came to the front, and remained the leaders of the S.L.P. until De Leon died a quarter of a century later. The party platform was rewritten by Sanial, with all references to state support for cooperatives cut out, and with the whole thing modeled in language on the Declaration of Independence. Outside of these changes, the platform remained essentially the same.

The 1889 platform of the S. L. P. begins: "The Socialist Labor Party in convention assembled, reasserts the inalienable right of men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and goes on to say: "With the founders of this government we hold that the purpose of government is to secure every citizen in the enjoyment of this right; but in the light of our social conditions we hold, furthermore, that no such right can be exercised under a system of economic inequality.

"With the founders of this republic we hold that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of government must be owned and controlled by the whole people, but in the light of our industrial development we hold, furthermore, that the true theory of economics is that the machinery of production must likewise belong to the people in common.

"To the obvious fact that our despotic system of economics is the direct opposite of our democratic system of politics, can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged class, the corruption in government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises and public functions to that class, and the abject dependence of the mightiest of nations upon that class."

WAITED FOR THE COLLAPSE

The fatalistic attitude toward the downfall of capitalism remained.

"The time is fast coming, however, when in the natural course of social evolution this system, through the destructive action of its failures and crises on the one hand and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalistic combinations on the other hand, shall have worked out its downfall." They viewed it as a mechanical process, without much action by the proletariat — many of their speakers frankly admitted that they were organizing the workers merely to prevent anarchy after the collapse of capitalism.

But the Party platform called the workers to "enroll under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, . . . so that held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying con-

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ditions of the present class struggle, we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, . . . and the substitution of the co-operative commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder," etc.

The S. L. P. officially aided in the launching of the Henry George movement, then withdrew. Large sections split away and went into Populism. Others were lost to the short-lived National Union Labor Party of 1887, which got 25,000 votes in Chicago against a Republican-Democratic fusion which got 50,000 votes.

POWERFUL INFLUENCE IN A. F. OF L.

In the A. F. of L. convention of 1892, S. L. P. delegates nearly won a favorable recommendation from the convention to the international unions of a plan for a labor party. The word, "favorable" was withdrawn only at the last minute.

A curious blindness and some cowardice were evident in the reaction of the S. L. P. to the war with Spain (April 20 to Aug. 12, 1898).

This was a war of American imperialism, to loot from Spain her colonies. Like most imperialist wars it was waged under the most high-sounding demagogic excuses. The particular excuse in this case was: "Free the oppressed Cubans!"

HOW NOT TO OPPOSE A WAR

The S. L. P. swallowed the imperialist propaganda, never once realised that it was an imperialist war, opposed it very mildly on pacifist grounds, and waged the bulk of its struggle against graft, mismanagement of military affairs, and against injustice to the workers who had to live under war conditions. The particular injustice that the S. L. P. concentrated its fire upon was conscription—and that turned out to be a sham battle because conscription was not needed at all by American capitalism during the Spanish war. From the beginning they had more volunteers than could be drilled and moved to the front.

Now the S. L. P. was so careful to avoid any shock to patriotic sentiment (which most of the members themselves felt in full measure) that it actually assisted in whooping up national chauvinism. While the party centered its "anti-militarist" activity around the fake issue of conscription, it used language that actually stimulated volunteer recruiting.

Here is a sample, one of many from platforms and resolutions

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adopted by state and city conventions of the S. L. P. during the war. This is from the platform adopted at the Iowa state convention of the S.L.P.:

"We view with admiration the ardent spirit of humanity which has impelled the workingmen of this country to volunteer their lives and services to politically emancipate the suffering Cubans from the barbarous oppression of the Kingdom of Spain and we extend the sympathies of American workingmen to the oppressed Cuban and Spanish workers who are trying to overthrow the hateful despotism which is destroying them.

"Fellow workers, the capitalist class which is the enemy of oppressed Cuban and Spanish workers is our enemy. . . ." Here follows a list of charges of graft and profiteering in the conduct of the war, then the platform continues:

"We recognize that the patriotism of the workers is enthusiasm for humanity, while the patriotism of the capitalist is enthusiasm for profits. We heartily commend the self-sacrifice of the former, and condemn the self-seeking of the latter. . . ." Then: "We demand that in case conscription becomes necessary to keep the army up to war standard, that the conscripts be drawn from the ranks of property owners." There follows a specific plan for the percentage of conscripts from each type of property owner, and a demand that they be not permitted to purchase substitutes.

A new factional struggle developed in the S.L.P. toward the end of the century. That struggle was the origin of the present Socialist Party.

WAR ON THE A. F. OF L.

De Leon, who had become the czar of the Socialist Party, split with the remnants of the Knights of Labor in a quarrel over the editorship of the K. of L. official journal. A clique he helped to power in the K. of L. promised to make Sanial editor, and then double-crossed him, and in 1895 refused to seat De Leon in the K. of L. convention.

An S.L.P. row with the A. F. of L. centered around the right of local bodies of the S.L.P. to affiliate with A. F. of L. city central bodies.

In 1895 De Leon put through his decision for an independent socialist union movement, and the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance was launched. It grew to some 20,000 members, and then

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started to decline. It really was too soon to put much emphasis on independent unions. The masses were in the A. F. of L., and the bureaucracy was not so firmly entrenched that it could not be unseated. An intelligent opposition movement within the A. F. of L. was the proper place for the main emphasis. Independent unions, even a Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance, might well have been useful as an auxiliary force, and could have cooperated with the left wing inside the A. F. of L. But at that time, and even down to 1927, no one could see this. It was always "either-or". If you were for "boring from within", then you were against any sort of independent or dual unions, and vice-versa.

STRUGGLE OVER DUAL UNIONISM

The opposition to De Leon's dual unionism began at once in the sections of the S.L.P. News of the struggle was kept out of the official party press and published reports as long as possible. Expulsions, however, were commonplace.

The De Leonites had a certain amount of justice in their argument that the opposition to dual unionism was not an honest one. The argument of the "rebels" in the S.L.P. was always in the form of a demand for the right to fight the "labor fakers" from within the A. F. of L. De Leon had plenty of evidence that the right most of these "rebels" really wanted was the right to surrender to the labor fakers, to make alliance with them, to become part of the bureaucracy of the A. F. of L. In general, it was one more case of a "practical", mostly native-born group hunting around for the morass. De Leon had led them into a desert of sectarianism and isolation, and they preferred the swamp of revisionism and degeneration. Nobody until the beginning of the left wing movement in the Socialist Party in the following century could see any but these two alternatives.

A COUP D'ETAT

The leaders of the rebellion against De Leon were practical enough to pierce a weak spot in his organizational apparatus. The constitution of the S.L.P. had some hang-overs from a more primitive time when communications were bad. It provided that the national leadership should be elected by the section in the city where the headqaurters were located. The headquarters were in New York. The insurgents controlled the section known as Greater New York, which did not include Richmond, Williamsburg, and various other portions of what had come to be considered Greater New

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York, geographically. These outlying portions of the city were pro-De Leon, and he relied on them for his political control of the S.L.P. in New York. The S.L.P. section, "Greater New York" controlled by the anti-De Leon faction, disregarded the outlying territories of greater New York, met, elected a new leadership, and seized all the headquarters' property it could get hold of.

The insurgents, having most of the membership with them, met in national convention in Rochester and, still calling themselves the "Socialist Labor Party," repudiated the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance and all it stood for.

For a couple of years then there were two Socialist Labor Parties each claiming to be the real one. There were also other Socialist Parties. The most important of these was Debs' "Social Democracy of America". It grew to about 5,000 members in the Middle West and had the support of Charles H. Kerr & Co., for 25 years later the main publishers of socialist classics in America. The famous and influential *International Socialist Review* started publication in this period as a supporter of Debs, and after the fusion of Debs' party and the S.L.P. insurgents in 1901, this magazine became the best of the left wing Socialist publications.

COLONIZATION AGAIN

"Social Democracy" was Debs' favorite child, born out of a fusion of small socialist groups on June 7, 1898, after the Buffalo Switchmen's and Pullman strikes had wakened him to the need of political action.

"Social Democracy" had all of Debs' energy, warm heartedness, class feeling and heroism, but also all his freakishness and sentimentality were expressed in it. Social Democracy's declaration of principles, as it appears in his paper *The Social Democrat*, is a repetition word for word of the Sanial "Declaration of Independence" platform of the S.L.P., with, of course, changes in the name of the organization.

SOCIALIST PARTY

The S.L.P. insurgents and Debs opened negotiations looking toward unity along in 1900, and a unity convention of the two parties met, July 29, 1901, at Indianapolis, with 124 delegates representing 10,000 members of both parties. The result was a merger, forming the Socialist Party of the United States (the

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present Socialist Party). It had a program loose enough to include both revolutionists like Debs and the "small traders, usurious money lenders and pure and simple corruptionists" whom De Leon had berated. On the whole, it was one more step into the morass. It so devitalized the revolutionary theory of Socialism as to become in practice just another reform party.

Spargo, William English Walling, Russell, came forward with an interpretation of Socialism that was worse than anything Bernstein thought of in Europe. Popular Socialist orators emphasized that socialism was "nothing but government ownership."

The further history of working class politics in America is chiefly that of the development of a left wing, this time more than ever before a left wing based on American conditions, and a revolutionary left wing, too, for these conditions were no longer very different from those of Europe. It was a left wing that came into sharpest conflict with the reformist Socialists during the war period, a left wing that advanced towards Bolshevism, while the right wing went from reformism to social fascism. That whole struggle is the subject for another article.

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From the Open Letter

Why is it that the Party adopts resolutions such as were adopted at the XIV Plenum of the Central Committee, and *does not carry them out?* Why is it that we do not learn from our experiences and mistakes in strikes, trade union and factory work, and from our work among the part-time workers and unemployed? Why is it that the leading bodies of the Party do not concentrate the full forces of the Party to help the comrades in a practical way in their difficult but most important Party work, namely, work in big factories, enabling them to overcome all the difficulties in this work? Why is it that the entire Party, from top to bottom, is not working to determine the best ways and means for establishing contacts with the most important sections of the workers, learning to overcome their prejudices, speak a language they understand and persistently and patiently help them to organize the struggle against hunger? Why is it that the Communist fractions in the revolutionary unions do not make a concrete investigation of the weaknesses in the work of the revolutionary trade unions in order to overcome these weaknesses?

Because in the Party, and particularly among the leading cadres, there is a *deep-going lack of political understanding* of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers. From this follows the fact that the leadership of the Party has not adhered to a fixed course for overcoming the main weaknesses of the Party, allows itself to be driven by events, and does not work out carefully with the comrades of the lower organizations ways and means for the carrying through of resolutions and checking up on their execution. The result is that we talk about factory and trade union work in countless resolutions, without carrying this work out.

* * * *

The working class will be in a position to fulfil its role as the most decisive class in the struggle against finance capital, as the

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leader of all toiling masses, only if it is headed by a Communist Party which is closely bound up with the decisive strata of the workers. But a Communist Party, with a very weak and inadequately functioning organization in the big factories and among the decisive sections of the American industrial workers, a Communist Party whose entire policy, whose entire agitation and propaganda, whose entire daily work is not concentrated on winning over and mobilizing these workers and winning of the factories, a Communist Party which, through its revolutionary trade union work, does not build highways to the broadest masses of workers, cannot lay claim to a policy capable of making it the leader of the working class within the shortest possible time.

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